

The Children's Agenda

Boldly Fitting The Pieces Together

The Data Piece

Montgomery County Collaboration Council

For Children, Youth & Families

The Data Piece Project Team

This report was developed by staff in Accountability and Customer Service, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with staff of the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families and represents our continuing partnership in seeking better outcomes for children.

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This is the first in a series of community reports designed to keep The Children's Agenda a living, working document. These reports are designed to increase understanding of the many important "pieces" that must be connected if we are to provide widened opportunities for all of our children.

With the adoption of the Children's Agenda, a commitment has been made to do things differently:

- Making data-driven decisions about investment of our resources.
- Basing strategies on research findings about effective programs.
- Planning in a way that crosses traditional organizational and historical boundaries.

A New Formula:

Data + Collaboration + Planning = Better Resource Allocation = Better Results

The "Data Piece"

- Provides a marker—a line on a measuring stick of success.
- Provides data that we will monitor over time to determine if our actions as individuals or the efforts of government or private sector programs, businesses, civic groups or faith communities are making a difference for our children.

This initial report provides policymakers and the larger community with an overview of three elements that depict how Montgomery County's children are faring:

- Important community-wide measures and trends that are indicators of child and family wellbeing.
- Measures for the Community Partnership Agreement that focus on whether the new system of services meets its intended targets.
- A final report on the program measures for the 1998 Young People Making Smart Choices Initiative that demonstrates how, when people come together, measurement can be brought to frontline activities and how data can influence budget decisions.



"The Children's Agenda identifies the many puzzle pieces that must fit together to create a community where children are a priority. Without data, we cannot put the puzzle pieces together to see if the picture of the lives of Montgomery County's children is one we can be proud of."

Larry Pignone, Community Sector Chair
Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children,
Youth and Families



Outcomes for Montgomery's Children

Stable and Economically Secure Families

Healthy Children

Children Safe in Their Homes, Schools and Communities

Young Children Ready for School

Success for Every Student

Young People Making Smart Choices

Young People Prepared for the Workplace

A Renewed Focus on the Needs of Montgomery County's Children

*C*reating a caring community where all children grow up to be safe, healthy, and have the support they need is a central goal for the entire community. To make this a reality takes the full effort and partnership of government, the private sector and individuals.

In the past three years, a number of significant initiatives have been undertaken to strengthen the well-being of children and youth in Montgomery County. Some examples are:

In 1997 the **County Executive** created the Young People Making Smart Choices Initiative. This effort brought together several County departments to focus on programs that support youth in making the smart choices necessary to become successful, contributing adults.

The first **Montgomery Measures Up!** report, published in March 1998, featured this effort.

In 1998 the **Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families** brought together many community and government representatives to develop a Children's Agenda.

The Children's Agenda: Boldly Fitting the Pieces Together, published in October 1998, identified the outcomes that we, as a community, want for our children and youth.

In March 1999 the **County Executive** identified his FY2000 budget as the "Children's Budget."

The County Executive recommended more than \$23.6 million in new funds for services for children, based on the research conducted by the Young People Making Smart Choices work-group and linking these to the Children's Agenda Outcomes.

In February 1999 the **Montgomery County Council** launched its "Children First" Initiative.

This initiative seeks to identify children's issues throughout all County Council committees, establish

priorities aligned with the outcomes of the Children's Agenda and coordinate budget allocations based on these priorities.

In September 1999 the Montgomery County Collaboration Council was awarded a \$7 million grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) to accelerate the implementation of a community-based "**Community Kids**" Initiative. This grant and initiative will help children and families by developing and delivering integrated resources and supports in their communities. The five-year-grant, with State and County matching funds, will bring a total of \$13 million worth of services to children and youth with serious emotional and behavioral problems.



"Montgomery County has developed an ambitious agenda to assure that children of all ages, from infants to teens, have the opportunity to succeed. Monitoring data is not just a numbers game. Behind each number is a child relying on us to do the right thing."

*Douglas M. Duncan
Montgomery County Executive*

Taking Action For Change

The Children's Agenda

is a catalyst for action. Organizations that have traditionally operated separately are coming together and consolidating their efforts, focusing on the outcomes we want for our children.

What has happened:

- We are getting a clearer picture of the resources and gaps in available resources, especially for preschool and middle school age children.
- We are involving all segments of the community in planning and decision making through the Community Based Strategy.

- The County Executive's recommended FY2000 budget, which he termed the "Children's Budget," included more than \$23.6 million in new funds for children's services to achieve goals linked to the Children's Agenda Outcomes.
- The County Council issued the Children First Initiative resolution in May, 1999 and approved the bulk of the Children's Budget.

- The Collaboration Council has fostered a partnership among the Department of Health and Human Services, the Juvenile Justice Comprehensive Strategies partners, the Early Childhood Committee and the Linkages to Learning Program to establish some consistent measures.

The Young People Making Smart Choices Initiative

brought together departments that had previously planned and advocated for resources separately. This pilot demonstrated that collaborative decisions, based on sound data and research on what works, have a positive impact on resulting resource and budget choices.

As the project moved forward, it became obvious that to get better results the group would need to:

- Identify current research on proven strategies.
- Share data across departments.

- Work together to solve problems.
- Share information with decision makers.
- Advocate for programs not within their departments.

What has happened:

The workgroup documented that, while research shows that young people are more likely to get into trouble during after-school hours, resources available during those hours had been reduced during lean budget years and services varied greatly by community.

Armed with this information:

- The Department of Recreation and the Volunteer Center immediately added programming at selected sites.
- The Interagency Coordinating Board for Community Use of Public Facilities expanded its services throughout the county by funding after-school activities coordinators at each middle school.

Based on research and trend data, the group sent the County Executive specific recommendations with a goal of improving academic achievement and reducing youth substance use/abuse, crime, inappropriate sexual

behavior, and school suspensions.

- The County Executive instructed County department heads to identify specific proposals for the FY00 budget for achieving the above goals and provided additional support to departments for data collection and analysis.

The County Executive and County Council responded positively to these recommendations:

- The Recreation Department received more than \$1 million to expand after-school activities and \$500,000 for ball fields.

- Three additional staff were added to the Police Activities League program.
- The Board of License Commissioners began using its underage volunteer program to enforce the laws regarding sales of tobacco to minors.

The former Young People Making Smart Choices Workgroup has been renamed The Children's Agenda Outcomes Workgroup. Working with the Collaboration Council, members will now focus on updating and monitoring all of the outcomes and measures identified in The Children's Agenda.

The Collaboration Council and the Young People Workgroup celebrate the exciting successes that have unfolded over the last year, applaud the County Executive's and the County Council's commitment to children, and are proud to have contributed to a growing movement toward data-driven, outcomes-based decision making.

What's In Store For The Future

In the next few years program and system-wide measures that incorporate both government and community efforts will be developed to assure that all services work together to achieve results. Our goal is **Better Data, Better Data Collection Systems, Better Analysis, leading to Better Results.**

The most important lesson we have learned over the last couple of years is that we need better data and the skills and technology to analyze and interpret the data. We have made a lot of

progress in this domain, but we have much more work ahead of us. Our current data systems are fragmented-reflecting an old way of doing business-and do not allow us to get a whole picture of how children and families are doing, nor do they allow us to track the costs of those services. Our data systems do not always collect the right data because they were designed to answer questions about volume of service for programs and not to track the progress of people as they move through systems of care. And finally, we need the right set of skills to build integrated data systems, ana-

lyze the data and, most importantly, interpret the meaning of the data so that we can plan better systems of care in the future.

We have taken one important step toward our goal by establishing the Interagency Data Capacity Work Group. Initially, the group is charged with identifying the resources needed to get a system of data collection and analysis in place for the Linkages to Learning program. The work group will then turn its attention to data systems in five broad areas: early childhood, child mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice and family violence.



The goal is better data, better data collection systems, better analysis, leading to better results.



“By working together, we can improve the well-being of our children and youth and better use and be accountable for the resources it takes to do so.”

The Children's Agenda 1998

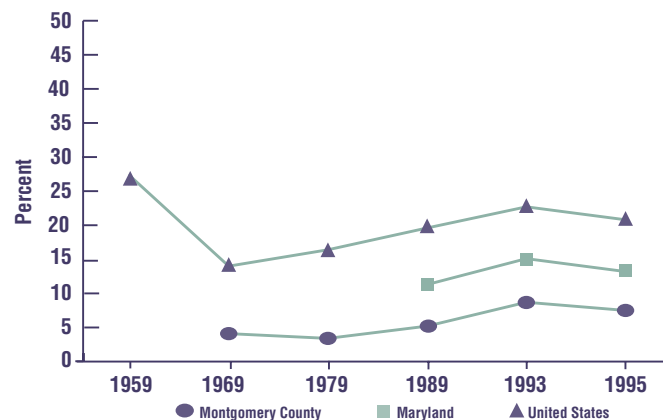
Outcome: Stable and Economically Secure Families

A nurturing and stable home environment is the foundation for every child's healthy development. If this foundation is shaken or crumbles, there can be dire and lasting consequences for children and their families. The Children's Agenda highlighted several important factors that can severely undermine a child's sense of stability and security, including poverty, lack of child support, domestic violence, child abuse, placement of children out of the home and availability of subsidized housing. Several of these are also matters of personal and family safety and are addressed in the outcome Children Safe In Their Homes, Schools and Communities.

Child Poverty

Children living in poverty in Montgomery County are at an even greater disadvantage because federal poverty income guidelines do not take into account the substantially higher cost of living in this county. The Federal Poverty Line for a family of four was \$16,700 in 1999. In 1997, the Montgomery County Community Action Board calculated that a family of four needs \$33,251 to meet minimum living standards. This amount is nearly 200% of the 1999 Federal Poverty Line.

Percent of Children Living in Poverty



Source: U.S. Census and 1999 Maryland Kid's Count Factbook

What the data show:

- An estimated 28,700 Montgomery County children under 18 years old were living at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line in 1995.
- While Montgomery County children are doing

better than children across both the state and the nation, more county children are living in poverty now than since 1969.

- The percent of children living below the Federal Poverty Line in Montgomery County, as well as

in Maryland and across the nation, increased markedly between 1989 and 1993.

- The good news is that there has been a modest reduction in the percent of children living at or below the Federal Poverty Line from 1993 to 1995.

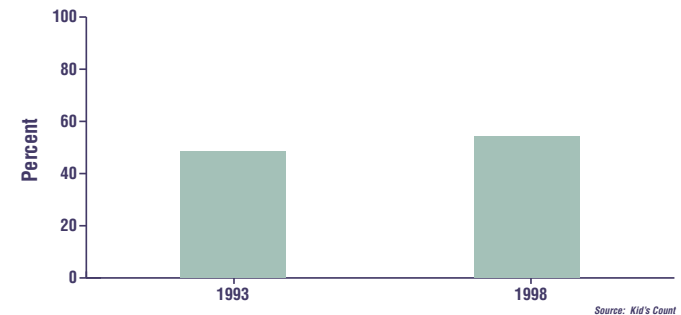
Child Support Enforcement

Every child has a right to the support of both parents, whether they are living with those parents or not. The security and stability of a child can be improved by the establishment and collection of child support.

What the data show:

- Over half (57%) of county households with children and incomes below the Federal Poverty Level were headed by single females, according to the 1990 census.
- Approximately 45% of children with active child support orders received none of the support owed to them by the absent parent in 1998. This does not include children for whom the custodial parent has not applied for child support or those still in the court process.
- The percentage of court-ordered child support cases that received some payment increased by almost six percentage points between 1993 and 1998.

Percent of Court-Ordered Child Support Cases That Received Some Payment, Montgomery County



Family Economic Well-being

Adult poverty and the community's welfare rate are part of the larger picture of economic security. The welfare rate is a key indicator of self-sufficiency and economic well-being. The goal of the welfare system in the United States has changed from long-term dependence on benefits to moving welfare (Temporary Cash Assistance or TCA) recipients off public assistance by way of stable employment. This is a difficult process, as recipients are often confronted with a number of barriers to stable, lucrative employment, such as: lack of education; lack of job-related skills and experience; low wage, part-time, temporary or seasonal work; work shifts that make child care arrangements difficult; transportation difficulties;

lack of health insurance and lack of affordable child care. TCA assists families in financial crisis to avoid welfare by helping them find or maintain a job. It also provides wel-

fare avoidance grants to families experiencing a temporary economic crisis that could result in losing their jobs and needing to apply for TCA.

What the data show:

- Since welfare reform was implemented in 1996, the number of people receiving benefits in the county decreased 80%.
- The percent of welfare recipients who became employed increased from 24% in FY96 to 43% in FY98.
- For the period October 1997 through June 1998, 30% of welfare recipient job placements included medical benefits.
- Montgomery County has the highest average starting salary (\$7.19) in the state for TCA placements.
- Based on the U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Estimates for 1995, an estimated 25,000 Montgomery County adults under 65 had incomes at or below the Federal Poverty Line; and an estimated 46,100 had incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line.





“Access to quality care is important to eliminate health disparities and increase the quality and years of healthy life for all Americans.”

Healthy People 2010 Report

Outcome: Healthy Children

While Montgomery County health status statistics are usually better than state and national statistics, not all children in Montgomery County have access to the medical care that supports good health. Children in low-income families are less likely to receive the preventive care that protects them from childhood illnesses and reduces their risk of disease in adulthood. This affects not only their physical health but also their intellectual, emotional and social development.

Children Who Have Access To Health Care

It is difficult to verify exactly how many children are in need of health coverage in this county. It was estimated in 1998 that as many as 40,000 children may be in need of subsidized care. Montgomery County is committed to seeing that all county children have a "medical care home" where they may receive all recommended preventive services, including immunizations and developmental screenings, as well as care for illness. In 1998 Maryland implemented the Maryland Children's Health Insurance Program (M-CHIP), which increased the income limits for pregnant women and children eligible for enrollment in HealthChoice (Medicaid). Care for Kids, a program supported by County funds and donations, also provides access to medical care for low-income children not eligible for Medicaid.

What the data show:

During 1998, enrollment of uninsured county children for subsidized primary health care (Medicaid, HealthChoice, M-CHIP, Care For Kids) increased from approximately 17,600 to more than 23,600. The majority of children newly covered live in families where the parents work in jobs that do not provide health insurance benefits.

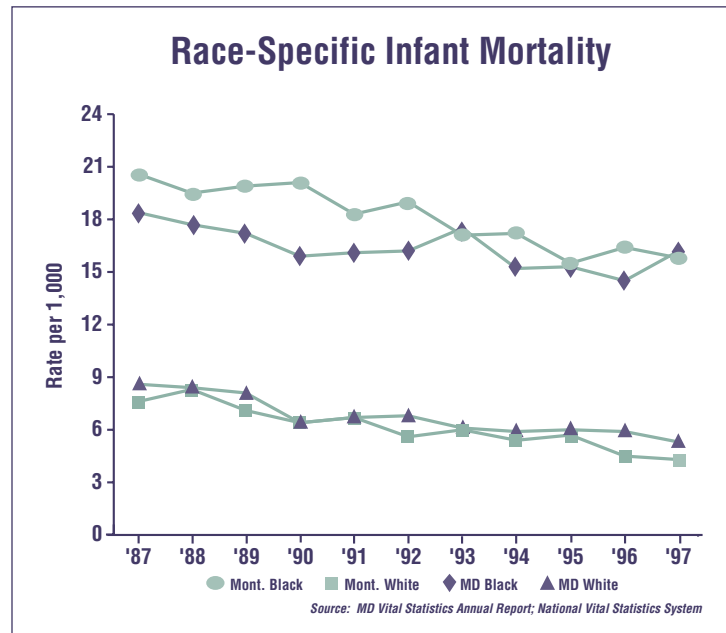
Number of Low Income Children Enrolled In Subsidized Health Care Coverage Programs



Source: Maryland Medical Assistance Program, DHMH

Infant Mortality

Infant mortality—death occurring before a child's first birthday—has many contributing factors: socioeconomic status, maternal health status, inadequate prenatal care and utilization of health care resources. Low birth weight is the most important factor associated with infant mortality and much of it is preventable through early and comprehensive prenatal care.



What the data show:

- The infant mortality rate in Montgomery County continues to decrease.
- In 1997, there were 6.2 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, well below the federal government's Healthy People 2000 goal of 7 deaths per 1,000 births.
- Although the overall trend is encouraging, the infant mortality rate for African-American babies is almost four times as high as for white babies.

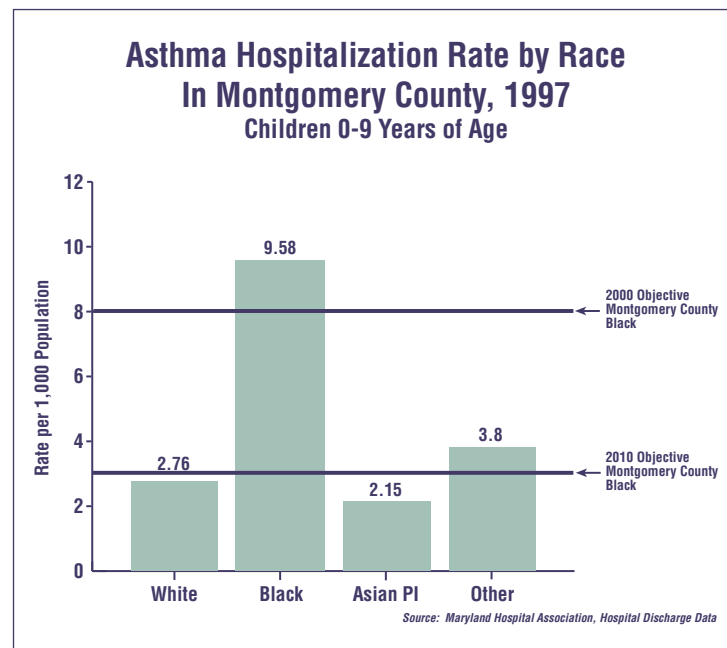
Asthma Hospitalizations For Children Age 9 Years and Under

Asthma is the most common chronic disease of childhood, resulting in more school absences and hospitalizations than any other condition. Minority children are disproportionately

affected and both children and adults in all racial groups have experienced substantial increases in asthma over the past two decades.

What the data show:

- The overall rate of hospitalization for children 0 to 9 years was 3.2 per 1,000 children in 1997.
- African American children are more frequently hospitalized for asthma. In 1997, 9.6 per 1,000 African American children age 9 and younger were hospitalized for asthma.
- Asthma hospitalization rates improved from 1996, when the rate was 3.8 for all county children and 10.7 for African-American children.



In FY99, a public/private sector initiative was organized to address the disparities in infant mortality, asthma and other health measures among African-Americans in the county.



"We have a responsibility to make sure that children are safe and healthy and have what they need to develop and grow. This is the mark of a caring community. We have to stay ahead of the trends, use the data and research available to us, and emphasize prevention and early intervention activities."

Charles L. Short, Director
Montgomery County
Department of Health and Human Services

Outcome: Children Safe in Their Homes, Schools and Communities

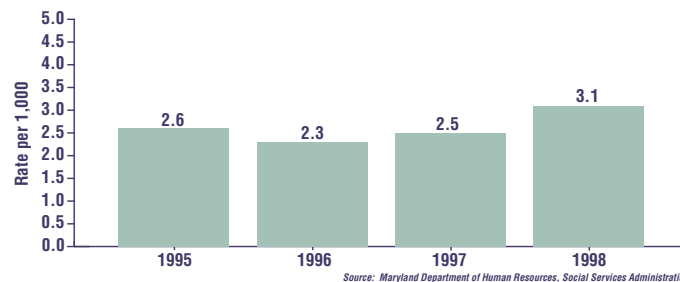
Physical and emotional safety is a fundamental right of children and a serious responsibility of parents, our social institutions and the wider community. Meeting these responsibilities requires an awareness of safety in several settings, including the home, school and community.

Safety In The Home

Child Abuse and Neglect

The protection of children from maltreatment is a grave responsibility shared by government, community and families. Child abuse and neglect rates reflect whether community services are in place to support parents and deter child maltreatment. Child abuse or neglect can result in physical harm, profound developmental and behavioral problems, or even death. Abused and neglected children are at increased risk of becoming involved in delinquent behavior and mistreating their own children when they are parents.

**Rate of Indicated Child Abuse and Neglect
Cases in Montgomery County 1995-98**
Children Age 0-17 Years



What the data show:

- The rate of indicated child abuse and neglect cases (those cases in which the abuse is confirmed or unable to be ruled out) in Montgomery County increased from 2.6 per 1,000 children in 1995 to 3.1 in 1998.
- Montgomery County has a much lower rate than both the state and nation. In 1996, the most recent year national figures are available, Montgomery County had a rate of 2.3 per 1,000 children, Maryland 7.2 and the United States 15.
- Child abuse and neglect is considered to be underreported. In Maryland, reports are counted per family, and more than one child in the family may be involved. Also, several national studies of family violence and child maltreatment have found that child abuse and neglect may be underreported by as much as 44%, even with mandatory reporting.

Domestic Violence

Violence between adults also endangers children in their homes. Domestic violence is linked with child abuse, substance abuse and family homelessness.

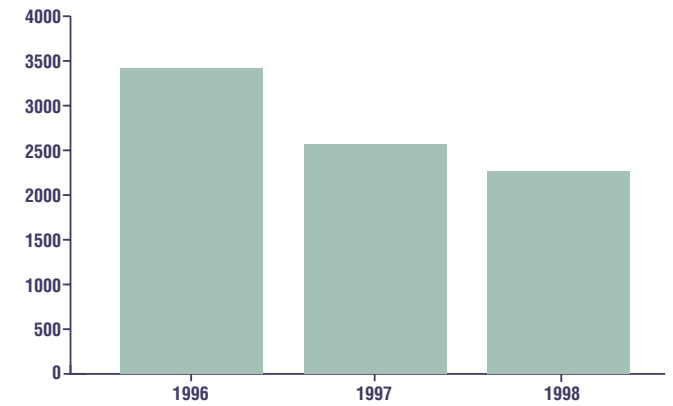
- Most women who report spousal abuse to the police do so only after a long pattern of abuse.
- Researchers estimate that over 50% of homeless women and children are in flight from abusive spouses.

- Evidence of spousal abuse is almost always found in cases involving a child abuse fatality and in 70% of all child abuse cases.
- Children who witness spousal abuse frequently are traumatized and exhibit this behavior themselves in later life.

There are strong links between child abuse, domestic violence and substance abuse. Studies conducted by

the Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs show that 50% of all spousal assaults involve alcohol. As a result of new research identifying the strong correlation between family violence of all types and substance abuse, the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families has joined a national effort to identify and collect data related to violence and substance abuse.

Reported Incidence of Domestic Violence Assaults in Montgomery County

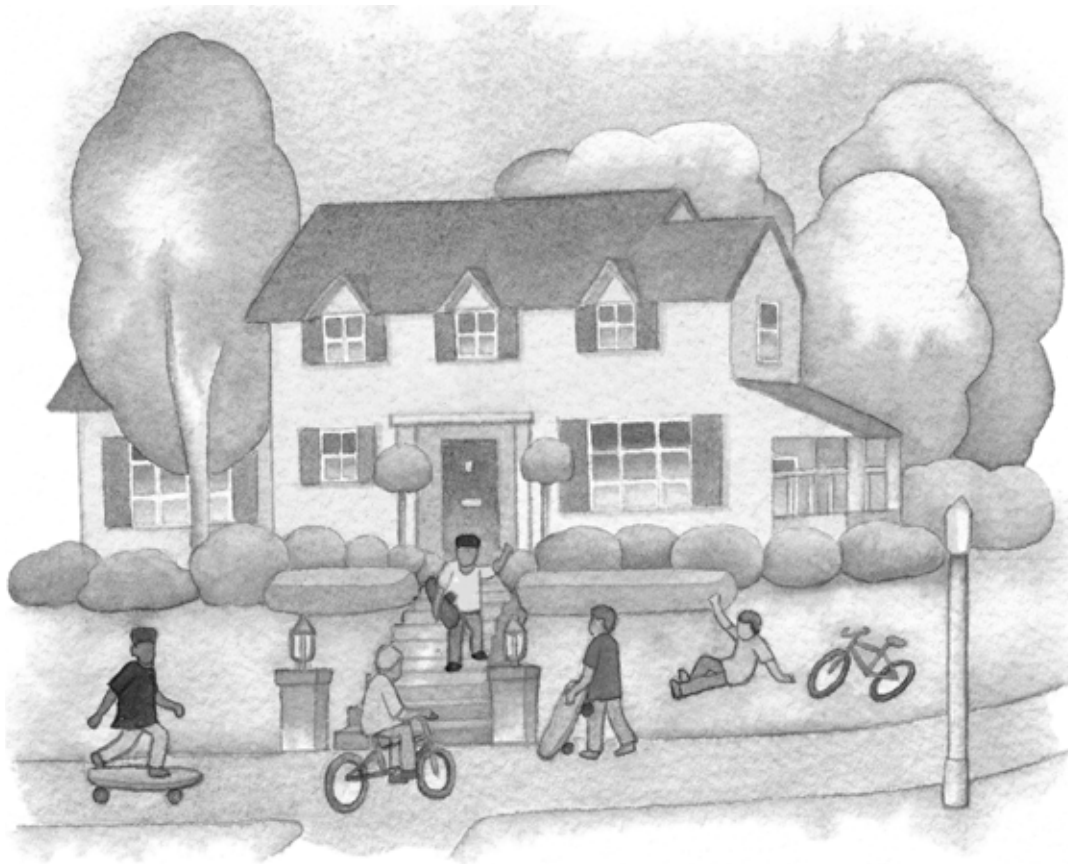


Source: Montgomery County Police Department

What the Data Show:

Since January 1996, police officers in Maryland are required to write up all spousal assault reports, rather than only those not resolved at the scene. As a result, comparable data are not available prior to 1996.

- Since 1996, reports of domestic violence have declined by one-third, from 3,414 to 2,270.
- It is too early to know whether the declines are due to increased enforcement and subsequent earlier intervention in family violence situations, or are due to other community influences, such as social or economic conditions.
- Preliminary numbers show that 171 families and 298 children were served in county shelters in FY99.
- Preliminary numbers show that 409 families and 810 children were provided motel shelter in FY99.



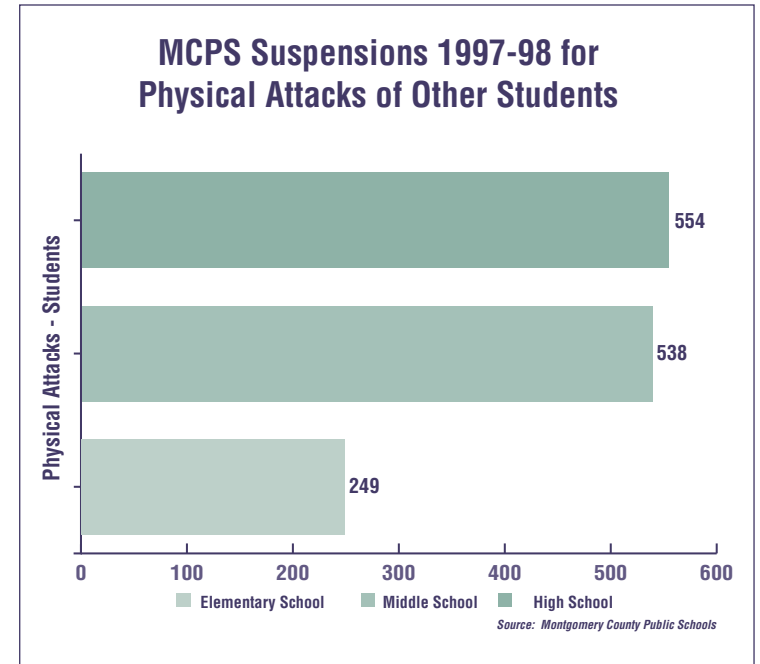
Safety In Schools

Schools must be safe and secure for students to learn and teachers to teach. Safety in schools has recently been threatened by an increase in reported physical and verbal assaults and an increase in the number of serious weapons found on Montgomery County Public School property.

- 10% of public schools nationally have experienced one or more serious violent crimes.
- An additional 47% of public schools, nationally, experienced less serious violent or nonviolent crimes.

- 16% of all high school students in the nation have been in at least one physical fight on school property in the course of a year.

Providing a safe environment in which children can learn must be a top priority. Schools are the connective link between the home and the community. They serve as a reflection of a community's strengths and challenges. In Montgomery County, the most frequent cause of suspensions for reasons of violence and/or victimization are for incidents of physical attacks on other students. This holds true across all age groups.



What the Data Show:

In 1997-98, physical attacks on other students accounted for:

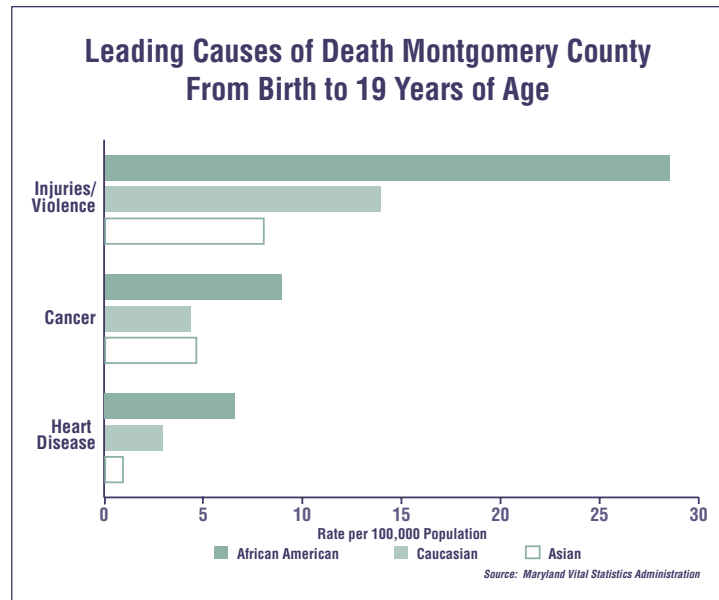
- 249 suspensions in MCPS elementary schools (0.4% of students)
- 538 suspensions in MCPS middle schools (2.0% of students)
- 554 suspensions in MCPS high schools (1.6% of students)

Safety In The Community

Unintentional deaths due to injuries or violence

For young people 1-19 years old, injury death rates are high relative to other causes of death. This is particularly distressing because all of these deaths are preventable. Of the injury deaths, motor vehicle traffic-related injuries are the leading cause of injury death worldwide. The same is true with Montgomery County

youth. Although the number of deaths each year is low, there is still room for improvement. Minority children are disproportionately affected. The death rate due to preventable injuries in African American children 19 years or younger is twice that of Caucasian children in the same age group.

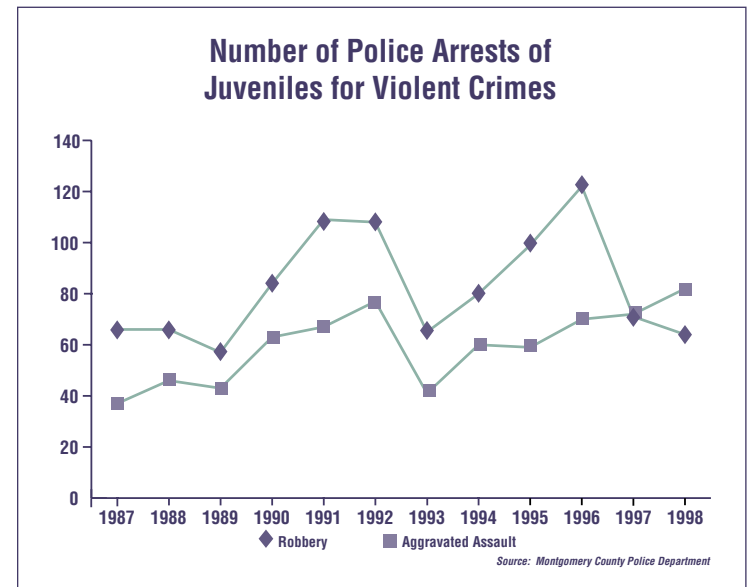


Violent juvenile crime

Robbery, aggravated assault, murder/manslaughter and rape are violent crimes. It is difficult to track arrests for murder/manslaughter and rape because juveniles arrested for these crimes are often charged as adults. Data on the number of juveniles charged as adults are not currently available.

What the data show:

- Robbery arrests have dropped in the past two years to 64 in 1998. Overall, between 1987 and 1998, the trend for juvenile arrests for robbery has remained stable even though the numbers have fluctuated dramatically from year to year.
- Juvenile arrests for aggravated assault is the one violent crime showing an increase in the trend since 1987. The number of arrests for aggravated assault in 1998 (82) are higher than any other year over the past decade and are more than twice the number in 1987 (37).
- Juvenile arrests for murder remain low, one arrest per year in both 1997 and 1998. The trend since 1987 has been stable.
- Although juvenile arrests for rape increased in 1998, the number has consistently remained below 20 per year since 1987.





Outcome: *Young Children Ready for School*

Ready for school is readiness to learn. Although there is no definitive prescription for how to measure readiness to learn, Montgomery County is focusing on:

- *Parent/caregivers providing basic care and nurturance.*
- *Affordable, high quality day care.*
- *Access to health services.*
- *Early prevention and intervention services for developmentally delayed infants and toddlers.*
- *Safe homes and communities in which children thrive.*

New research about brain development reveals that the first three years of life are critical. Factors that adversely affect children's ability to learn include:

- *Poor quality of daily care hinders brain development by discouraging interactions and limiting environmental stimulation.*
- *Poor nutrition in young childhood leads to much lower scores on tests of vocabulary, reading comprehension, arithmetic and general knowledge.*
- *Malnutrition can cause delays in physical growth and motor development and leads to social withdrawal.*
- *Substance abuse by the mother, both during and after pregnancy, has been shown to affect brain development of the infant.*
- *Depression harms a mother's ability to nurture her baby so the baby does not develop as well.*
- *Exposure to toxins, such as lead, can cause brain damage and stunt brain growth.*
- *Early exposure to trauma leads to anxiety, depression and an inability to form healthy relationships. This can lead to a susceptibility to violence in later life.*

"Good intentions are no longer enough. We must do a better job of gathering the information needed about our children, especially our youngest children, before problems arise. The data give us the facts that help guide our decisions. They tell us whether the programs we fund are really making a difference in the lives of our at-risk children."

*Michael L. Subin, President
Montgomery County Council*

Availability of Quality, Affordable Child Care

Quality care is difficult to locate and assess. To ensure quality in child care settings, well trained, qualified providers are needed. Staff must have the education and skills to establish safe, nurturing environments with enriching interactions to maximize early childhood brain development. Montgomery County children benefit from strong child care regulations in Maryland which support research on child development and require low staff/child ratios, particularly for children under age two.

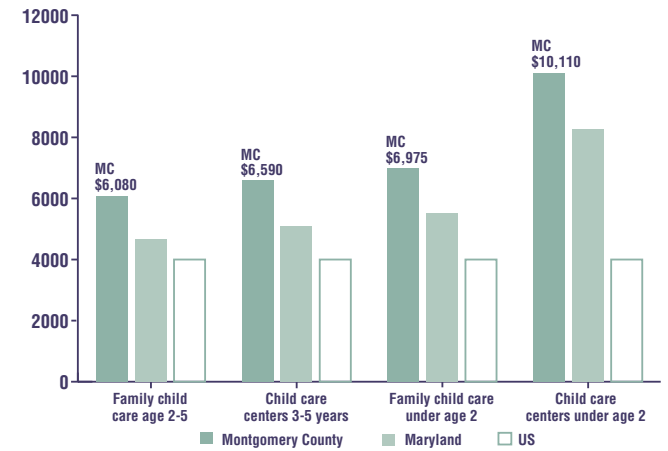
What the data show:

- Child care expenses consume about one-fourth of the income of families living in poverty.
- Average child care expenses nationally are estimated at \$4,000 per child per year.
- Child care expenses for families with children 3-5 years old, at all income levels, consume the second or third largest amount in the family budget.
- In both Maryland and Montgomery County expenses are higher than the national average, ranging from \$6,000 to \$10,000 per year per child.

Parents need to be educated about both the importance of early childhood

brain development and on choosing the best child care setting.

Average Child Care Expenses (for one child per year - 1998)



Availability of Subsidized Child Care Assistance

In 1997, 68% of county women with children age 0-5 years worked; 66.5% of women in married couple families, and 79.4% of mother only households with children age 0-5 years worked. As a result of the high costs associated with licensed child care, too many children in low-income families are placed in makeshift care arrangements, which often lack the stimulating environment needed to ensure optimum brain development. This is particularly

distressing in light of recent research showing that low-income children benefit the most from high-quality, enriched programs.

- Long-term studies show positive, lasting effects on academic achievement and social adjustment for children attending quality programs.
- Although research has found examples of excellent, quality care in all varieties of child care settings, most studies found care overall is poor to mediocre.

- One large-scale national study found that 40% of programs serving infants and toddlers actually jeopardize children's health and safety.
- A large-scale national study of family child care homes found 13% of regulated homes and 50% of unregulated homes were substandard.

What the data show:

Montgomery County Working Parents Assistance Program (WPA) assists lower-income families in meeting the costs of child care. However, there is a greater need for subsidies for County families than there are funds to provide assistance.

- As of August 31, 1999, there were 392 families with an estimated 625 children on the waiting list for WPA assistance.
- The maximum income for a family of any size to earn and still be eligible for assistance is \$35,000. For a single-parent family, the cutoff is at \$27,000.



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The Collaboration Council is charged with establishing the capacity to evaluate the effectiveness of service delivery and track outcomes for children and families.

*Charge from the Resolution
establishing the Collaboration Council*

Outcome: Success for Every Student

No other community institution has been assigned more responsibilities or faces more challenges than our educational system. Society's changes, trends and needs all go to school with students. Eighty-three percent of Montgomery County school-age children attend public schools. The 1999 fall Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) enrollment was 131,181 students. Between 1985 and 1995, MCPS experienced the eleventh largest enrollment gain in the United States (27,411 students). Over 8,030 students are in the English for Speakers of Other Languages program.

Percent Of Students Achieving Proficiency Standard For Reading Grade 3 And Grade 8

Students who perform well on the criterion referenced tests (CRT) in reading reflect a high level of reading ability and comprehension consistent with their grade level. Students who achieve the proficiency standard in reading also tend to perform well in other subject areas since reading provides the basis for acquiring information. The tests provide an assessment of not only student success but also the success of individual schools in meeting the standards of the school system.

What the Data Show:

- Across all grades, the average percent of students in each grade meeting the standard increased slightly in each year since the test was first administered in the spring of 1994.
- The 1998 average for all grades meeting the standard was 71%, compared to 67% in 1994.
- Average reading results across Grades 3 to 8 by racial/ethnic group meeting the standards are 82% for Caucasian students, 75% for Asian-American students, 48% for Hispanic students, and 46% for African-American students.
- There have been gains of between 4 and 6 percentage points for all racial/ethnic groups since 1994.
- The biggest long-term gains since 1994 in meeting the standard were in Grade 5 from 68% of students to 75% of students and Grade 4 from 67% of students to 72% of students.
- In 1998, Grade 5 students became the first to meet the countywide standard of 75%.

Percent Of Students Achieving Proficiency Standard For Mathematics Grade 3 And Grade 8

Students who perform well on the criterion referenced tests (CRT) in mathematics reflect a high level of mathematics ability and comprehension consistent with their grade level. Mathematics is considered a critical building block course of instruction, with algebra in middle school or high school being the "gateway" course to higher level subjects. The criterion referenced tests provide an assessment of not only student success but also the success of individual schools in meeting the standards of the school system.

What the data show:

- In 1998, 60% of MCPS students across all grades tested met the math standard.
- This was a 2-percentage point gain from 1997 when a new, more difficult standard was implemented. This new standard added open-ended questions to the previously used multiple-choice questions. The change in standards means that any comparison to results reported prior to 1997 would not be valid.
- Asian-American students had the highest average percent of students meeting the standard across the grades at 72% compared with 71% of Caucasian students, 33% of Hispanic students, and 27% of African-American students. These results were similar to those in 1997.

Percent of Students in Grade 3 and 8 Meeting MCPS Math CRT Standard



Percent of MCPS Students Grades 3-8 Meeting the MCPS Standard for Reading CRT 1994-1998

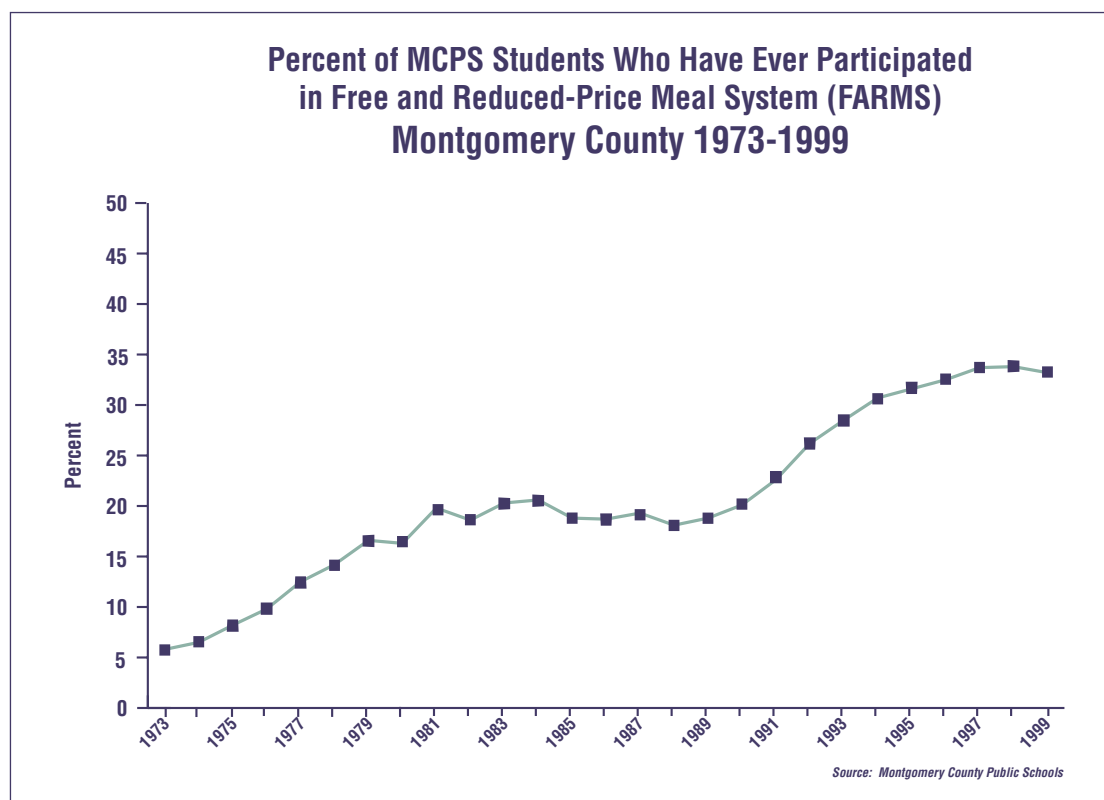
Grade	Spring 1994	Spring 1995	Spring 1996	Spring 1997	Spring 1998
Grade 3	66	65	67	70	70
Grade 4	67	67	69	69	72
Grade 5	68	71	71	73	75
Grade 6	67	67	67	67	69
Grade 7	68	68	69	69	70
Grade 8	68	68	68	70	71

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools



Ensure Availability of Free And Reduced-Price Meals To Eligible Students

The federal Free and Reduced-Price Meal System (FARMS) provides breakfast and lunch at school to low-income students. Participation in FARMS provides a clearer picture of the economic conditions in the community that have a significant impact on a child's mental and physical well-being. There is a direct correlation between participation in the meals program and performance in schools, especially on academic proficiency measures and other assessments: low-income children who receive the meals perform better than those who do not. According to MCPS Department of Educational Accountability research, the effect of poverty surpasses any other demographic characteristic related to school performance.



What the data show:

- One-third of the students enrolled in MCPS have or now receive food and nutritional assistance through the federal Free and Reduced-Price Meal System.
- The percentage of students ever receiving such support has grown dramatically in recent years, rising from 20.1% in 1991 to 33.2% in 1999.
- The breakfast program has grown as students increasingly rely on schools to provide two of their three basic meals each weekday.

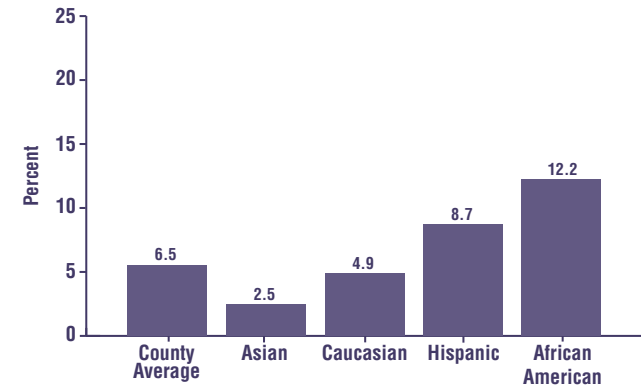
School Suspensions

Students avoiding disciplinary trouble contribute to the overall success of the environment for teaching and learning. Being suspended reflects a serious infraction of the disciplinary standards for schools and places the student at risk of a long-term removal from school and possible expulsion. Good student behavior, adherence to rules and regulations, and a commitment to learning cooperatively reflect strong character development.

What the data show:

- Approximately 94% of students are not suspended from the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).
- Since 1995-96, the suspension rate has remained relatively constant, increasing slightly from 6.1% in 1995-96 to 6.5% in 1997-98.
- Significant differences occur in the suspension rate among students by race and ethnicity. In 1997-98, the suspension rate was 12.2% among African American students, 8.7% among Hispanic students, 4.9% among Caucasian students and 2.5 among Asian students.

Percent of MCPS Students Suspended by Racial and Ethnic Differences, 1997-98



Source: Montgomery County Public Schools





“One of the greatest opportunities we have for making a difference in the lives of young people is through interagency efforts that involve the whole community. Our children can make smart choices if we work together to provide them with the appropriate guidance, support and encouragement. We have good children in Montgomery County and I encourage everyone to join us in helping them make the best decisions regarding their education, activities, and preparation for the future.”

*Dr. Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools
Montgomery County Public Schools*

Outcome: Young People Making Smart Choices

*A*dolescence is a time of experimentation and testing of limits. The choices adolescents make about their education, experimenting with alcohol or other drugs, premature and unprotected sexual activity, and engaging in criminal activities hold many risks that could have lifelong consequences. Creating an environment in which our young people are encouraged and supported in making smart choices will improve their capacity to become capable, independent, contributing adults.

Percent Of Students Completing Algebra 1 In Grade 9

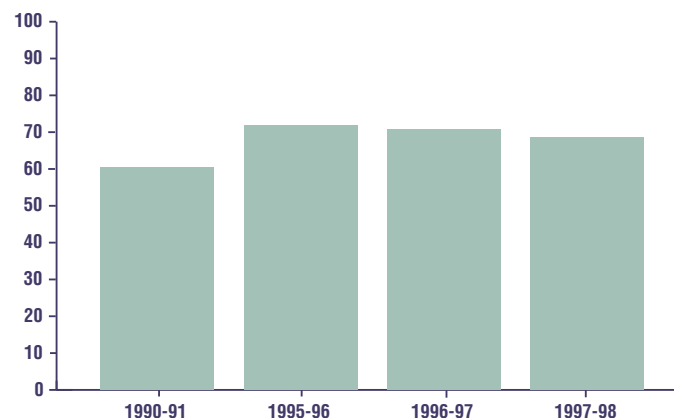
It has been demonstrated that student success in higher level mathematics courses, especially honors and advanced placement courses, is vital to exceptional performance on the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and successful preparation for college and university studies.

Successful completion of Algebra 1 in Grade 9 is the foundation course for all other higher-level mathematics courses. MCPS has set a goal of 80% of students completing this course in Grade 9.

What the data show:

- The completion rate of Algebra 1 in Grade 9 in MCPS has declined consistently since 1995-96 (71.9% to 68.7%).
- Nonetheless, the passing rate still remains higher than the benchmark rate of 60.4% in the 1990-91 school year.
- The percentage passing this course by race and ethnicity reveals significant differences. The passing rate in 1997-98 was 82.1% of Asian students, 81.7% of Caucasian students, 45.4% of African American students and 42.8% of Hispanic students.

Percent of Students Completing Algebra 1



Source: Montgomery County Public Schools

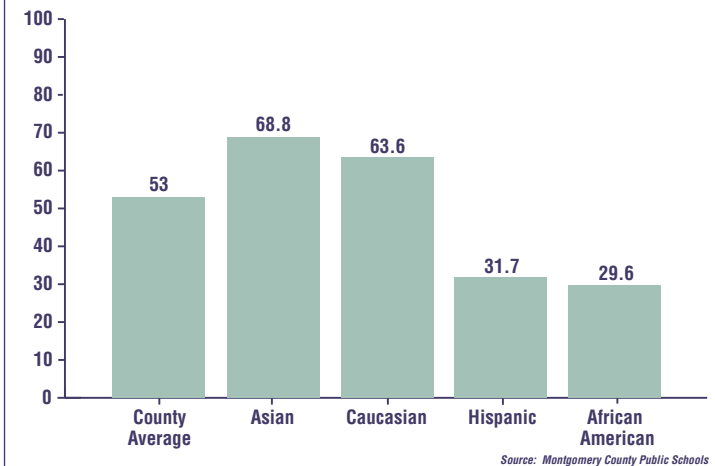
Percent Of Students Enrolled In Honors And Advanced Placement Courses

Students who achieve satisfactory completion of higher level academic programs have undertaken a rigorous instructional program and, in the case of advanced placement courses, have earned the opportunity to test for possible college credit. Schools are encouraged to offer as many such courses as possible to the largest number of students because they offer excellent opportunities for superior academic achievement in preparation for college and the world of work.

What the data show:

- Participation in honors and advanced placement is increasing, but there are still significant differences by race and ethnicity in the percentage of students enrolled.
- In 1990-91 just 45.7% of all high school students in MCPS were enrolled in one or more honors or advanced placement courses. Since 1995-96, 53% of all high school students each year have enrolled.
- Since 1990-91, participation among all racial and ethnic groups has increased.
- In 1997-98, the percentage enrolled was 68.8% of Asian students, 63.6% of Caucasian students, 31.7% of Hispanic students and 29.6% of African American students.

Percent of MCPS High School Students Participating in Honors and Advanced Placement Courses by Racial and Ethnic Differences, 1997-98



Percent of Youth Who Reported Smoking Cigarettes

As one of the first addictive substances used by young people, tobacco is viewed as a major gateway drug for other addictions. While it is not clear that tobacco use leads to use of alcohol and other drugs, young people who use tobacco frequently go on to use other substances. Addiction to tobacco can be extremely difficult to overcome. The risk of heart disease and cancer, two leading causes of death in this county, can be significantly lowered by abstaining from cigarette smoking.

In a recent survey conducted by an antismoking student

group, 71% of high school students who smoked tobacco used alcohol, while less than 25% of non-smoking youth drank alcohol. In the same

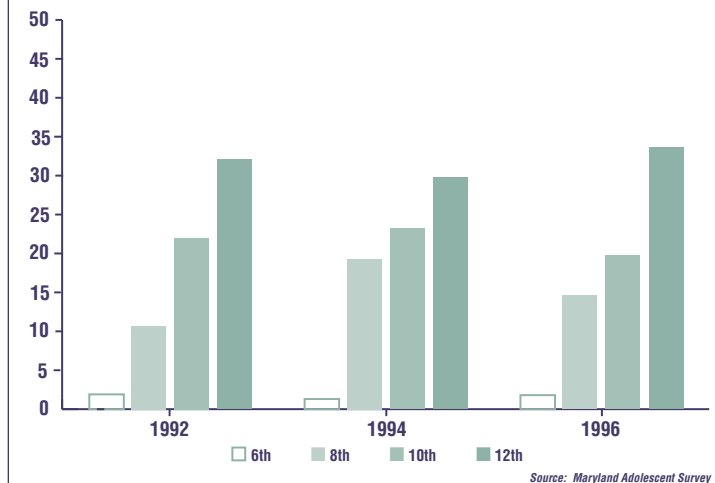
survey, 59% of tobacco smokers used marijuana while only 10% of nonsmokers did.

What the data show:

According to the most recent Maryland Adolescent Survey in 1996:

- Most young people first tried cigarettes between sixth and eighth grades. Youth in 6th grade increased usage since 1994.
- 14.6% of Montgomery County eighth graders reported smoking cigarettes within the past 30 days, down from 19.3% in 1994. State figures also fell, from 20.8% in 1994 to 17% in 1996.
- In 1996, smoking declined among tenth graders.

Percent of MCPS Youth Who Reported Smoking Cigarettes in Past 30 Days



Percent of Youth Who Binge Drink

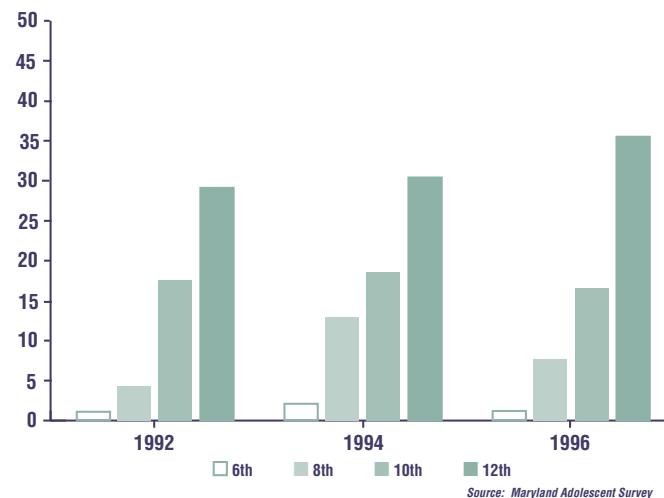
The Maryland Adolescent Survey defines binge drinking as consuming five or more alcoholic drinks on the same occasion within the past 30 days.

Binge drinking is particularly dangerous with respect to teenage driving and has serious implications concerning potential addiction. Binge drinking puts teens at risk for alcohol poisoning (which can lead to death), date rape and other types of violence.

What the data show:

- In 1996, binge drinking among both eighth and tenth graders decreased from 1994.
- However, binge drinking among high school seniors increased from 30.4% in 1994 to 35.5% of students in 1996.
- Youth who report binge drinking once a month often binge more frequently although no data are available on the county level concerning frequent binge drinking.

Percent of MCPS Youth Who Reported Binge Drinking in Past 30 Days



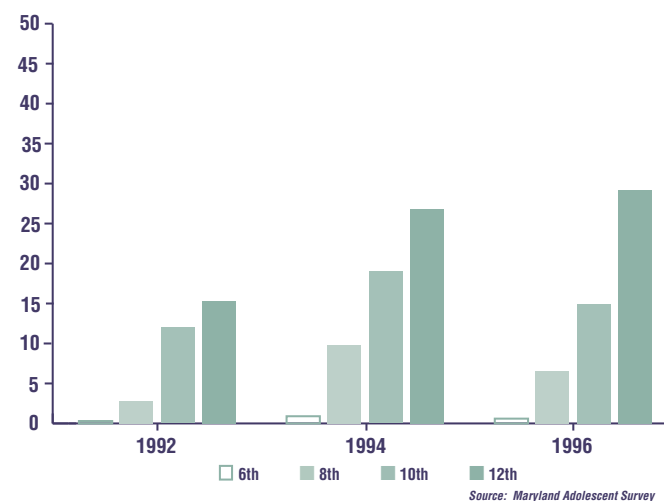
Percent of Youth Who Use Marijuana

Not only is marijuana use illegal, it can also become addictive and can result in long-term neurological impairment. Surveys show that marijuana use frequently starts in eighth grade and increases as youth get older. More than 90% of hard drug users report marijuana as their first drug. If efforts to prevent marijuana use among eighth graders are successful, use among older adolescents should decline in the future.

What the data show:

- Marijuana use among county eighth graders *increased* from 2.8% in 1992 to 9.8% in 1994, and then *decreased* in 1996 to 6.6%.
- Decline in marijuana use was also reported by 6th and 10th graders surveyed.
- Among twelfth graders, however, marijuana use increased from 26.8% in 1994 to 29.2% in 1996.

Percent of MCPS Youth Who Reported Marijuana Use in Past 30 Days



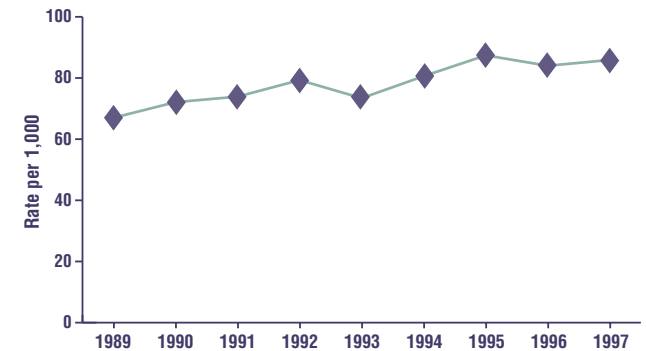
Juvenile Crime

Juvenile crime rates are an indicator of the safety of county residents. Juvenile criminal behavior is affected by many factors including poverty, family problems such as child abuse and domestic violence, and failure in school.

What the data show:

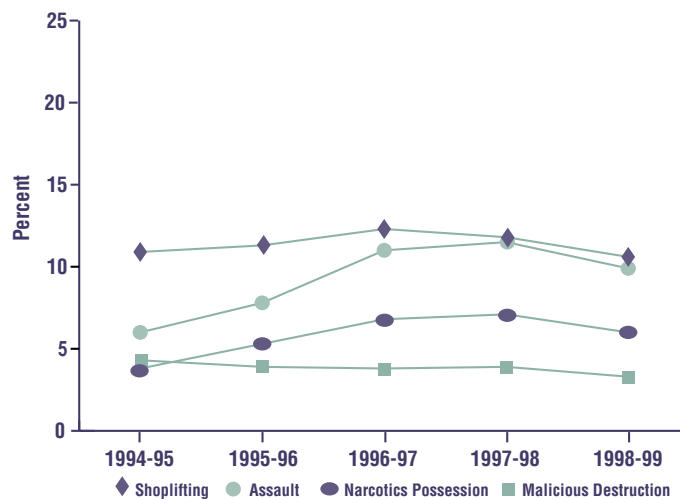
- In 1997, there were 85.9 intakes per 1,000 11-17 year-olds, a slight decline from the peak rate (87.4) in 1995.
- The overall trend since 1989, however, suggests that juvenile crime is increasing.
- The most common juvenile offenses reported at intake by the Department of Juvenile Justice for county youth include shoplifting/theft, assault, malicious destruction, and narcotics possession.
- In 1997 the intake rates for all offenses declined from the previous year.
- Shoplifting/theft and assault have consistently remained the most frequent offenses.
- Rates for breaking and entering showed the least fluctuation from 1993-97.

Montgomery County Juvenile Justice Intakes and Diversions Rate per 1,000 11-17 Year-Olds



Includes Dept. of Juvenile Justice Intakes plus first time offenders diverted from DJJ by the police.
Source: Juvenile Comprehensive Strategy Report

Most Common Juvenile Offenses Rate per 1,000 11-17 Year-Olds



Source: Juvenile Comprehensive Strategy Report





“All children have the right, the need and the capacity to be prepared for a world where change has become the only constant and where the ability to be a lifelong learner will define successful and meaningful life outcomes.”

Gene Kijowski
Vice-Chair, Montgomery County
Work Force Development Corporation

Outcome: Young People Prepared for the Workplace

To successfully negotiate any life transition, we all need a strong and stable support system. For young people entering the adult workplace without adequate academic and/or vocational preparation, the transition can be frustrating, intimidating and discouraging. It can be even more challenging for young people with disabilities.

Percent of Students Taking The SAT and the System-Wide Average Score

An important indicator of a student's preparation for college is the score achieved on the verbal and mathematics portions of the SAT, a test that is required by most colleges and universities in the eastern United States. The achievement of a high score on the test reflects a significant accomplishment, incorporating successful completion of higher level courses in both middle school and high school. The SAT remains the most often used measure of the instructional success of a high school, as well.

What the data show:

- High school students in MCPS have achieved the highest average scores on the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) among any school system in Maryland and the second highest in the Washington area, far above the national and statewide average scores.
- The average score has increased to 1096 in 1998-99, up eight points since 1995-96 and 16 points since 1990-91.
- At the same time, the percent of students taking the test has increased from 74% in 1991-92 to 79% in 1998-99.
- However, the average score disaggregated by race and ethnicity reveals significant differences. In 1998-99, the average score was 1149 for Caucasian students, 1131 for Asian students, 973 for Hispanic students and 922 for African American students.

Percent of MCPS High School Students Taking SAT by Racial and Ethnic Differences

	County Average	Asian	Caucasian	Hispanic	African American
1994-95	73	77	76	38	60
1995-96	75	82	80	39	62
1996-97	76	84	80	39	62
1997-98	77	85	80	43	63
1998-99	79	84	80	43	62

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools

Average Score MCPS High School Students Taking SAT by Racial and Ethnic Differences

	County Average	Asian	Caucasian	Hispanic	African American
1994-95	1087	1122	1131	982	929
1995-96	1088	1122	1132	965	914
1996-97	1092	1111	1138	993	922
1997-98	1092	1134	1137	995	919
1998-99	1096	1131	1149	973	922

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools

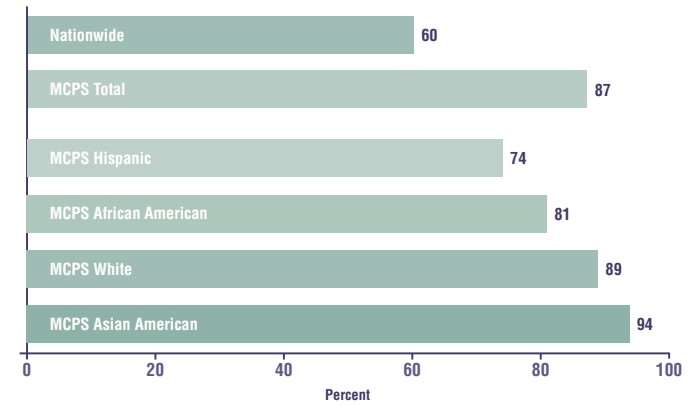
Percent Of Students Planning to Attend College After Graduation

MCPS graduating seniors are more likely than their national counterparts to plan to attend college after graduation. According to a survey of 1997 graduating seniors, nearly 9 out of 10 plan to attend either a two-year or four-year college or university, compared to only 6 out of 10 nationwide.

What the data show:

- 87% of MCPS students plan to attend college.
- 68% of MCPS students plan to attend four-year institutions.
- Asian American students are more likely than other racial/ethnic groups to plan to attend either a two or four-year college: Asian American 94%; white 89%; African American 81%; and Hispanic 74%.

High School Seniors With Plans to Attend College



Successful Outcomes For Youths With Disabilities After High School Graduation

It has been estimated that every year 80,000 children are born in the U.S. with some type of disabling condition. Today, with special training and support, many people with disabilities are able to work and lead productive lives. This indicator is a measure of Montgomery County's success in preparing persons with disabilities for self-sufficient and productive lives.

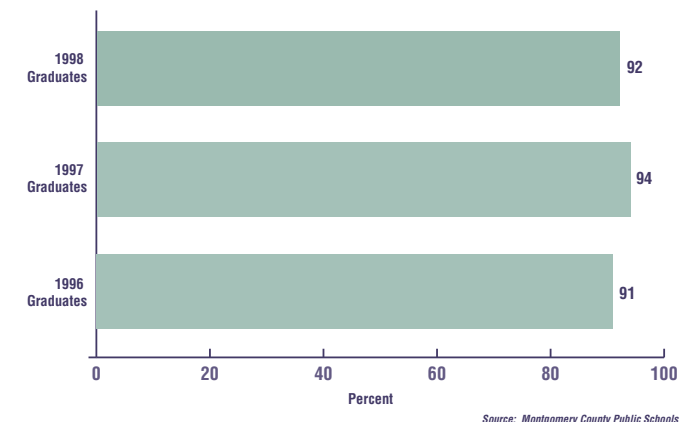
From 1996 through 1998, the Transitional Services unit of Montgomery County

Public Schools has contacted former students with disabilities who received the two highest levels of services to determine the percentage of successful outcomes six months after graduation. Disabilities among this group include autism, learning disabilities, mental retardation, other developmental disabilities, head and spinal chord injuries, chronic disease conditions, emotional impairments, orthopedic problems, and hearing and vision impairments.

What the data show:

- The percent of graduates with successful outcomes remained relatively constant from 91% in 1996 to 92% in 1998.
- Among those with successful outcomes, 32% were working in competitive employment, 19% were in college or other post-secondary schools, 25% worked or volunteered in supported jobs, and 16% were both employed and attending post-secondary schools.

Percent of Montgomery County Youth With Disabilities With Successful Outcomes After Graduation From High School



Note: A successful outcome is defined as: (1) working in a competitive employment situation; (2) working or volunteering in a sheltered or adult service-supported employment situation; (3) employed or attending post-secondary education classes; (4) in college, vocational school or post-secondary education; or (5) receiving other adult services (e.g. living in a group home setting). This last category is defined in state law as a successful outcome because it represents advancement to a *higher* level of functioning than before.

Doing Things Differently: Changing the System of Services

History

In recent years, communities throughout the nation have sought more effective ways to help families and children in trouble. Efforts have been made to reduce fragmentation of health and social services, improve access to services, increase flexibility and invest in preventive measures. These efforts have been a response, in part, to concerns that an increasing number of children were being placed in residential facilities outside of their homes in order to meet their special educational, safety or emotional/behavioral needs. Particular concern was expressed for those children placed out-of-county or out-of-state.

Systems Reform Initiative (SRI): A Pilot Effort

In an effort to address these concerns, in 1992 the Maryland Legislature mandated that each county create a Local Management Board (LMB), to which state funds would be transferred for two purposes:

Return/Diversion

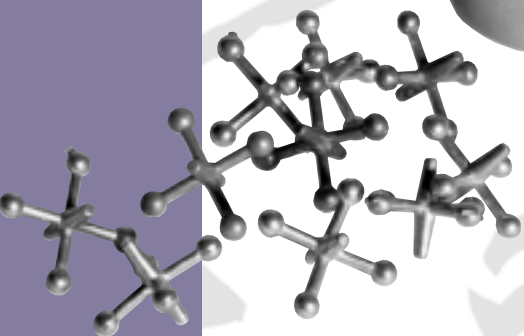
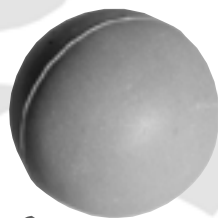
- Bringing children back from out-of-state residential placements.
- Diverting children from such placements.

Family Preservation

- Preventing unnecessary out-of-home placements for abused, neglected or delinquent youth.

In this pilot effort, called the Systems Reform Initiative (SRI), flexible funding was provided for “wrap-around” services in the community to help families and children succeed while keeping families together, when possible, or by maintaining the child in the local community close to the family.

In Montgomery County, the LMB is the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families. It is an independent body established by Maryland legislation, operating under charges from the Montgomery County Council, the County Executive and the Board of Education. Collaboration Council members represent both the public and private sectors, including nonprofit agencies, parents and a broad range of other community representatives.



The Community Partnership Agreement

In 1997 Montgomery County applied for and was selected by the State to expand systems reform, with more funds and responsibilities transferred to the local level. Lengthy negotiations resulted in the signing of the Community Partnership Agreement, effective July 1, 1999, that established plans for the next phase in the effort to make our system of services for children and families more responsive to local needs and local decision making.

The agreement expands the system reform efforts in Montgomery County by establishing a comprehensive children and family interagency service delivery system that is community-based and family focused. This expansion process, currently known as *Community Partnership for Children, Youth and Families*, was created through a partnership between the State Subcabinet for Children, Youth and Families and the Montgomery County Collaboration Council. It is based on a shared vision and a joint commitment to advance a results-based accountability and management system that enhances child and family well-being.

Operating Principles

The operating principles of the Collaboration Council in negotiating the *Community Partnership Agreement* were to:

- Provide child-centered, family-focused, and community-based services for those youth for whom these services were appropriate, as an alternative to placement in residential care.
- Broaden the comprehensive service system in the community to provide more cost-effective, clinically appropriate services and improve well-being outcomes in the least restrictive environment, while still protecting the community.
- Provide appropriate community-based services as alternatives to divert youth from more restrictive and costly placements.

Primary Objectives

The primary objectives of the *Community Partnership Agreement* are to:

- Continue to return youth in out-of-state placements and divert youth from those placements.
- Institute diversion plans for in-state juvenile justice residential placements above the level of group home.
- Institute a program to delay/prevent institutionalization of autistic children ages 5-10.
- Expand Family Preservation services for abused/neglected or delinquent youth.
- Develop an expanded, comprehensive and community-based continuum of graduated sanctions and structured and therapeutic services for delinquent youth, including day treatment, after-care services, gender-specific programming, substance abuse services, mental health services and mentoring.
- Centralize the referral process for services for delinquent youth and develop the flexibility to move youth along the continuum to best meet their needs and the needs of the community.

*Residential Treatment Centers (RTC), which provide psychiatric services, are excluded because their funding is not included in the Agreement.

Accountability Under the “Community Partnership Agreement”

From the beginning, the Systems Reform Initiative (SRI) was accountable to the State for achieving results. Continued funding depended on meeting specific goals, such as decreasing the number of children placed in foster care or out-of-state. A specific result was that out-of-state placements dropped from 57 in 1994 to 30 in 1998. In addition, approximately 1335 children at risk of foster care placement were able to remain with their families with the help of short-term supportive family services. The success of this pilot phase resulted in over one million dollars in savings returned to the Collaboration Council to invest in resource development and the infrastructure costs of building an integrated system of care for children’s services.

In the *Community Partnership Agreement*, specific measures were identified and targets set. Data systems are being developed to show clearly whether the newly agreed upon targets are achieved. Objectives include:

- Developing adequate data systems, both for administration of services and for monitoring the well-being of children served.
- Moving resources from the more expensive services needed for families in crisis, to increase resources for prevention and early intervention efforts.
- Assuring that services are driven by child and family needs, developed in collaboration with the child and family, and that they achieve results.

Status Report On Performance Measures For The Community Partnership Agreement

The *Community Partnership Agreement* expanded the target population previously covered under systems reform to include children at high or imminent risk of out-of-home placement and receiving residential special education services, child welfare services or residential juvenile justice services. Although a separate plan was developed for each target population, they share a common goal which is consistent with the Children’s Agenda Outcomes: *Children and youth who are healthy, safe, succeeding in school and prepared for a productive adulthood, within a support system of a stable family and a safe and caring community.*

This report provides information on the availability of baseline data and plans for measurement of progress toward reaching this goal.

The three plans within the *Community Partnership Agreement* each focus on a separate target population.

Plan # 1: Out-of-State Placements.

Plan # 2: Child/Family Services.

Plan # 3: Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Placements.

Each plan establishes measures for both system or program performance and child well-being. Baseline data are being collected where available and periodic reports of progress on measures will be sent to the Subcabinet for Children, Youth and Families and shared with the community.

A work group was convened to identify appropriate child well-being assessment tools. The work group reached a consensus recommendation on which assessment instruments to use to monitor child well-being for each target population, in addition to State-mandated requirements.

Operationalizing the use of these measures will require agreement across County agencies on what confidential information can be shared, and the circumstances under which that can occur.

Plan 1: Out-of-State Placements

Population:

- Children in, returned or diverted from out-of-state or in-state residential placement above the level of a group home.
- A pilot group of autistic children, ages 5-10, at risk of out-of-home placement within 2-5 years.

System/Program Measures

Data Collection: The number of out-of-state and in-state residential placements are tracked manually by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Maryland Department of Human Resources and Department of Juvenile Justice. The number of in-state residential school placements are tracked manually by MCPS.

Goal 1: Reduce Out-of-State Placements Above Group Home Level.

Performance Measure: A 76.7% reduction from the end of FY97 to the end of FY00, resulting in a maximum of seven publicly funded out-of-state placements at the end of FY00.

Progress/Status: Reduction targets were met for FY98 and FY99.

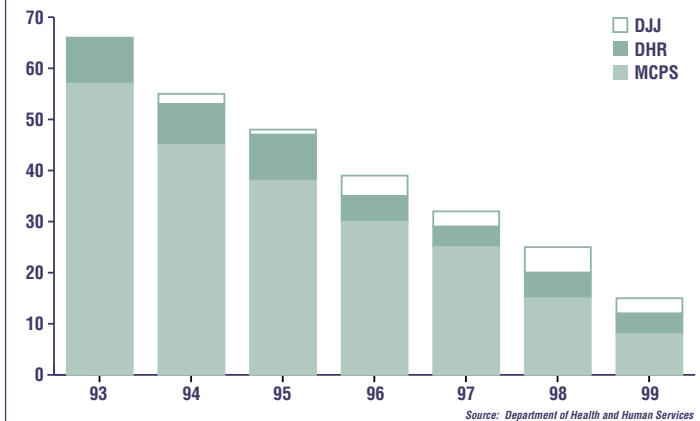
Goal 2: Reduce In-State Residential Placements (excluding Residential Treatment Centers) above group home level.

Note: Residential placements under the agreement are residential schools providing educational services. Residential Treatment Centers, which offer psychiatric services, are not included because the funding for the therapeutic component of those placements is provided through Medical Assistance. These funds are not yet available for home and community-based mental health services pending approval of the federal 1915(c) waiver.

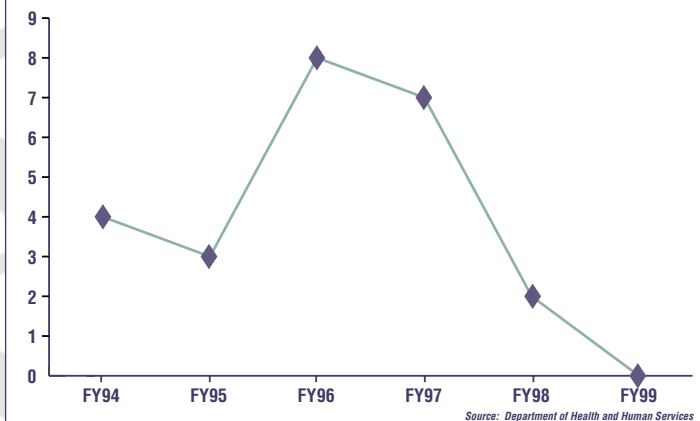
Performance Measure: A 57.1% reduction from the end of FY97 to the end of FY00 in the number of new entrants to in-state residential care (not including those returning from out-of-state), resulting in a maximum of three new placements during FY01.

Progress/Status: Reduction targets were met for FY98 and FY99 targets.

Number of Out-of-State Residential Placements By Fiscal Year in Montgomery County



Montgomery County Students Who Are New Entrants to In-State Residential (non RTC) Placements: FY94-FY99





Child Well-being

Goal: Assure the well-being of children served.

Performance Measure: *Improvement in child well-being for children who are returned from out-of-state or in-state residential placement (excluding DJJ), or at risk of out-of-state or in-state placement but diverted to the community.*

There are three populations included in this measure:

- Return/Divert Developmentally Disabled (DD) Population.
- Return/Divert Seriously Emotionally Disturbed (SED) Population.
- Autism Pilot Population.

Data Collection: Progress will be measured by standardized well-being assessment scores, grades and achievement test scores. However, different assessment tools may be applied to each population to provide the best picture of child well-being for that population. These tools will be administered at regular intervals to monitor progress, pending agreement regarding sharing of confidential data.

Plan 2: Child and Family Services

Population: Children and families who are presently served by the child welfare system, as well as children at risk of becoming part of the system.

Note: This includes several subpopulations that will have their own performance measures.

1. Family Preservation Services

System/Program Measure:

Goal: Reduce Recidivism of Child Abuse and Neglect.

Performance Measure: *Recidivism among indicated cases of child abuse or neglect during the 12 months following family preservation case closure.*

Data Collection: Beginning July 1, 1999 recidivism in abuse and neglect cases will be tracked for indicated cases using the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) Client Information System (CIS). Recidivism of family preservation cases will be compared to recidivism for other child welfare clients.

Child Well-being Measures:

Goal: The County will assure the well-being of children at high or imminent risk of out-of-home placement due to child abuse or neglect.

Performance Measure: *Improvement in the level of child well-being and family stability for high and imminent risk families entering the child welfare system (using North Carolina Family Assessment Instrument).*

Data Collection: The Maryland Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF) has mandated that the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS) be administered to all DJJ and child welfare family preservation-funded cases as of Jan. 1, 1999, as well as DJJ clients receiving day treatment, community supervision or selected other diversion services. Data collectors are currently using the automated NCFAS data entry feature.

2. Children in Foster Care

System/Program Measures:

Goal 1: Reduce New Entrants to Foster Care.

Performance Measure: *Reduction in the rate of children entering foster care over a three-year period.*

To have a system that assures results, it will be important to combine this performance measure with measures of child well-being. Ultimately, the goal of reducing foster care placements must be coupled with measures that assure the child's safety and monitor overall well-being to ensure that children are not inadvertently placed at risk. Efforts are underway to develop mechanisms to measure and track child well-being.

Performance Measure: *Beginning on April 1, 1999, the number of family preservation cases that become new entrants to foster care and the total new entrants to foster care can be monitored through use of downloaded Maryland Department of Human Resources Client Information System (CIS) and Foster and Adoptive Child Tracking System (FACTS) data.*

Goal 2: Reduce Length of Stay in Foster Care.

Performance Measure: *Reduction in the average length of stay in foster care.*

Although there are mandated time frames for establishing permanent plans for children in foster care, this measure should be coupled with child well-being measures to assure that the focus remains on the child, not simply the system.

Performance Measure: *Beginning April 1, 1999, length of stay in foster care will be monitored through the downloaded Maryland Department of Human Resources Client Information System/Foster and Adoptive Child Tracking System (FACTS) data. Data analysis is in progress.*

Goal 3: Reduce Re-Placement of Foster Care Children.

Performance Measure: *Increase in the number of children living safely in permanent placements, as indicated by a reduction in the number of (unplanned) re-placements.*

Performance Measure: *Beginning April 1, 1999, the number of unplanned re-placements of foster care children can be obtained from the downloaded State CIS data file. Data analysis is in progress.*

Child Well-being

Under this agreement, the only child well-being data to be collected for child welfare cases is the NCFAS data for family preservation cases.

Plan 3: Department of Juvenile (DJJ) Placements

Population: Limited to Montgomery County resident youth adjudicated delinquent or in need of supervision by the Montgomery County Juvenile Court. (Out-of-county youth are excluded from the performance measures, as are county youth offending elsewhere.)

Note: There are a number of placement facilities that are not monitored under this agreement because the funding source is not within the authority of the partners involved in the agreement. A list of those facilities included /excluded is available from the Collaboration Council.

System/Program Measures

Goal: Increase percentage of delinquent youth at risk of placement who are diverted into community-based programs.

Performance Measure 1: Reduction in percentage of Montgomery County youth adjudicated delinquent or CINS (Child In Need Of Supervision) by Montgomery County Juvenile Court Who Are Placed in Residential Care.

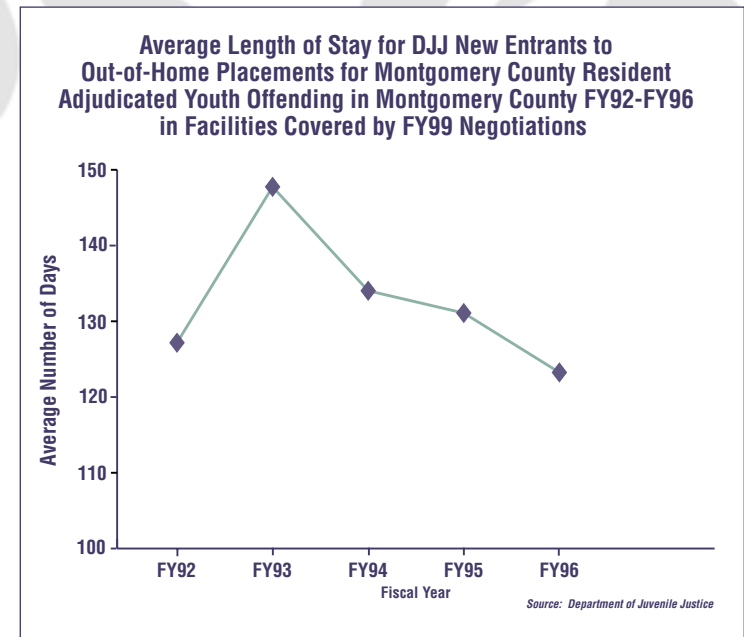
Data Collection: Operational tracking and monitoring will initially be done using the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Information System for Youth Services (ISYS). By the beginning of 2000, the new DJJ information system, ASSIST (Automated Statewide Support and Information Tools) will be utilized. Department of Health and Human Services supervisory staff are linked to ISYS and will be linked to the ASSIST system.

Progress/Status: Data analysis is in progress.

Performance Measure 2: Reduction in length of stay for such youth who are placed in residential care.

Data Collection: Prior to November 1, 1999, operational monitoring of length of stay was done using the Department Of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Information System for Youth Services (ISYS) system. The new DJJ information system became operational November 1.

Progress/status: Baseline figures for FY92 - FY96 on the length of stay for county youth placed in the included DJJ facilities have been obtained from the Department of Juvenile Justice Information System for Youth Services (ISYS) placement files.



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Performance Measure 3: *Reduction in recidivism (re-adjudication on a new offense) rate for such youth who are at high risk of placement, but are diverted into community programs or who are returned to the community from residential placement.*

Data Collection: Recidivism rates will be determined for all resident youth receiving family preservation services or entering a diversionary or aftercare program on or after July 1, 1999. Determination of recidivism rates of county youth requires an analysis of DJJ intake data for recidivism in the juvenile system, as well as data from the adult system. A complete assessment may include analysis of County and State adult corrections data.

Progress/status: Department of Juvenile Justice Information System for Youth Services intake data files are currently available to determine baseline recidivism trends within the juvenile system for FY92-FY97. Data analysis is ongoing. Collaborative relationships with data providers in the adult corrections system must be formed.

Child Well-being

Performance Measure 1: *An improvement in child well-being of such youth who are at high risk of placement, but are diverted into community programs or returned to the community from residential placement. (Well-being will be measured using a standardized well-being assessment score, dropout rate, graduation rate, grades, and student achievement test scores (CRT).)*

Data Collection: The Maryland Office of Children Youth and Families requires that the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale be administered to all Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) family preservation-funded cases as of Jan. 1, 1999. Forms are currently being completed for all youth participating in the day treatment and community supervision programs.

Performance Measure 2: *An increase in school attendance rates and a reduction in school suspension rates for such youth who are at high risk of placement, but are diverted into community programs or who are returned to the community from residential placement.*

Data Collection: These performance measures are contained in the list of educational measures to be collected from MCPS for youth covered under the negotiated agreement. Additionally, expulsion rates will be tracked. Data negotiations are ongoing.

Concluding Statement

The Accountability Committee of the Collaboration Council is responsible for monitoring the indicators and program measures in the *Children's Agenda* and the performance measures in the *Community Partnership Agreement*. The Interagency Data Capacity Committee is reviewing the status of county data systems, and identifying the resources and policy changes needed to fully implement a results-based accountability system for children, youth and families in Montgomery County. The Interagency Data Capacity Committee is presenting a series of reports to the Accountability Committee of the Collaboration Council in FY00 regarding these matters.

Asset Building Through Programs and Services

Young People Making Smart Choices Program Measure Update

Why do some young people get into trouble while others do not? Is there a way that parents, schools and communities can help young people make better choices about crime, drugs, sex, and school performance? Because adolescents are poised at the crossroads of childhood and adulthood they can be tempted to experiment with behaviors that appear adult but have significant individual, family and social consequences.

Over the last 30 years, researchers have investigated these questions and have produced an impressive body of evidence regarding what places children at risk and what protects children from engaging in problem behaviors. Problem behaviors—early sexual activity, teenage pregnancy, alcohol and other drug use, school failure and criminal activity—can have severe and long-term consequences for adolescents and their families, as well as society. They also have long-term costs.

What works to help young people make smart choices

Understanding the factors that increase the chances of adolescents developing behavior problems is the first step in designing effective strategies. A review of the research suggests that substance abuse, school failure, juvenile crime, and early sexual behavior share common risk factors. These risk factors fall into four areas: community, family, school, and individual and peer.

- *Community risk factors* include such things as easy availability of drugs and firearms, community laws and norms favorable toward drug use, crime rates, media portrayals of violence, low neighborhood attachment and community disorganization, and poverty.
- *Family risk factors* include family history of problem behavior, family management problems, family conflict, and parental attitudes and involvement in the problem behavior.
- *School risk factors* include academic failure in elementary school and lack of commitment to school.
- *Individual and peer risk factors* include alienation, rebelliousness and lack of bonding to society; friends who engage in the problem behavior; early initiation of the problem behavior; and lack of impulse control.

Some generalizations can be made about these risks:

- *Risks exist in multiple areas.* Since risk factors exist in all areas of life, communities should focus on reducing risks that affect several areas.
- *The more risk factors present the greater the risk.* The more risk factors a young person is exposed to, the greater the likelihood of that person engaging in one or more of the problem behaviors. Reducing or eliminating even one risk factor may significantly decrease risks for young people living in a particular community.
- *The same risk factors can produce many different behavior problems.* When any one risk factor is reduced, it is likely to affect a number of different problems in the community.
- *Risk factors are the same for different races, cultures and classes.* While risk levels may vary in different racial, cultural, or socioeconomic groups, the way in which these risk factors work does not appear to vary. Programs that target specific risk factors should be able to be adapted to fit various groups in the community.
- *Protective factors may reduce the impact of risk.* Protective factors are conditions that buffer young people from negative consequences by either reducing the impact of the risk or changing the way a person responds to the risk.

Making a Difference in Children's Lives

Research has identified 40 experiences and qualities, called “developmental assets” that help protect young people from destructive behavior. Everyone can help build these assets: individuals, communities and organizations. These assets are grouped into eight categories:

- Support: Young people need support, care and love from their families and other adults, as well as organizations that provide positive, supportive environments.
- Empowerment: Young people need to be valued by the community and have opportunities to contribute to others.
- Boundaries and expectations: Young people need to know which behaviors are considered acceptable and which are not.
- Constructive use of time: Young people need opportunities for growth through creative and constructive activities.
- Commitment to learning: Young people need to develop a lifelong commitment to learning.
- Positive values: Young people need to develop strong values that guide their choices.
- Social competencies: Young people need skills that help them build relationships and make positive choices.
- Positive identity: Young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth and promise.

Based on this research, Montgomery County created the Young People Making Smart Choices Work Group, now renamed the Children's Agenda Outcomes Work Group, to better identify opportunities for County departments and agencies to promote asset development. This section reviews the progress made by the programs that were included in the 1998 *Montgomery Measures Up! Young People Making Smart Choices* report.

Many programs help develop more than one asset. For this report, the programs are grouped by the most prominent asset to which they contribute. In most cases, programs only began collecting data in 1998/99, so trend data do not yet exist.

Constructive Use of Time

Adolescents are most likely to engage in negative behaviors after school, between 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Teens who go home to an empty house or hang out with friends after school are far more likely to smoke, drink, use drugs, or engage in early sexual activities. According to the Network for Children, 21% of Montgomery County children have no one at home to supervise them after school. The following are examples of programs that help youth make more constructive use of their time after school.

After-School Activities Coordinator Initiative

Goal: To increase middle school student participation in after school activities.

In the first year of the program, 30 to 32 middle schools participated in the Community Use of Public Facilities After School Activities Coordinator program (ASAC). Each ASAC contractor coordinated, monitored, and communicated with the school administration, staff, students, parents and the community as well as government, non-profit, and commercial entities to create seamless after school services based upon the collected data. The ASAC established an After School Activities Advisory Committee, comprised of key stakeholders. The group distributed a needs assessment to parents and students in order to identify the after school priorities of the individual community.

Program evaluation surveys sent to principals yielded very positive results. Eighty-eight percent of middle school principals reported an increase in communication with parents, and ninety-two percent reported an increase in communication with students as a result of the ASAC program. Ninety-three percent reported that the program helped to increase the number of students participating in the after school programs rather than spending this critical time of day unsupervised and thereby meeting our program goal.

Future Program Measures:

- 1. Average number of after-school activities at middle schools.**
- 2. Total number of participating students.**

Data will be available at the end of the 1999/00 school year.

Youth Basketball

Goals: To increase fitness levels of county young people.
To prevent the development of juvenile crime.

The Montgomery County Recreation Department sponsors a variety of after school and weekend sports activities, providing opportunities for thousands of county youth to engage in vigorous exercise, to learn how to work as a team, and to benefit from the role model coaches provide. The basketball program was selected for this report because it provides the most aerobic benefit, has the largest participation of the youth sports and offers the longest season. The Department of Recreation offers a comprehensive basketball program for Montgomery County youth in grades K-12. Youth leagues are organized at the neighborhood level, as much as possible. Competitive leagues are also offered.

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Program Measure 1: Number of students participating in basketball programs:

- The number of participants in the winter leagues increased from 11,200 in 1997 to 13,410 in 1998.
- An additional 587 students participated in instructional basketball clinics for students in grades 3-6.

Program Measure 2: Participation by females in all levels of the basketball program:

Girls participating in basketball increased 2.7% in 1998 from the previous year, for a total of 5,700 girls in grades 3-12. Approximately 100 additional girls participated in the winter league, 132 in the middle school summer league and 516 in the summer high school league. Participation by girls increased from 36% of total participants in 1997-98 to 38.7% in 1998-99.

Program Measure 3: Fitness levels of participants in the Montgomery County Recreation Department youth basketball program:

A fitness measurement for participants has not yet been implemented. To increase fitness levels for youth in grades 1-12 through the basketball program, a minimum of three hours of participation per week per participant is recommended. Due to limited available gym space, participants are limited to two hours of play per week rather than the three hours per week recommended to increase fitness levels. This increase would require an additional 650 hours of gym time per week based on current enrollment.

Partnership For Youth Advancement: Internship Program

Goal: To provide young people with meaningful work experiences in public service settings.

The Montgomery County Office of Human Resources, in collaboration with the Montgomery County Public Schools and Montgomery Youth Works, established the Partnership For Youth Advancement Program in 1996. This competitive and selective youth development program places high school students as interns in County departments and agencies.

According to recent surveys, nearly three-quarters of all high school and college students do an internship before they graduate, compared to slightly more than one-third in 1980. When given the chance, talented interns can provide organizations with an efficient, enthusiastic and inexpensive workforce, while the interns can explore career options and gain practical experience. Internships offer one of the most useful and rewarding learning options for students.

Program staff report that some of the interns who are high school seniors have indicated they will pursue a public service career. Six interns who are part of Wootton High School's Special Needs Program have been successfully placed in the County's cafeterias in the Executive Office and Council Office buildings, and were involved in the experiential workplace component.

Future Program Measures:

- 1. Percent of all students placed.***
- 2. Percent of students placed who rate the program as beneficial.***
- 3. Percent of mentors/intern supervisors who report the experience as worthwhile.***
- 4. Percent of the County departments/agencies who participate in the program.***

Data will be available later in FY00.

Empowerment

Recent studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of community service in preventing adolescent problem behaviors. Communities that view youth as resources and that provide youth with opportunities, skills and recognition for making an active contribution create a protective environment for healthy development. Effective student volunteer programs offer opportunities for accomplishing developmental tasks and providing protective factors that lead to improved personal decision-making skills and improved life choices.

Student Volunteer Opportunities

Goal: To provide MCPS students with information about volunteer opportunities.

Montgomery County Volunteer and Community Service Center, Montgomery County Public Schools, and Montgomery County Association of Volunteer Administrators are lead agencies in this initiative. Students in Maryland are required to complete 75 hours of community service to graduate from high school. The Volunteer and Community Service Center collaborates with the public schools and the Association of Volunteer Administrators to administer the student community service program. The Volunteer Center maintains a database of volunteer opportunities and trains staff in private agencies that are interested in having student volunteers.

Program Measure 1: Number of agencies approved for Student Service Learning placements:

- The number of agencies that have participated in the program increased from 67 in 1993 to 275 in 1998.
- In 1998, 38 of the agencies were newly approved.

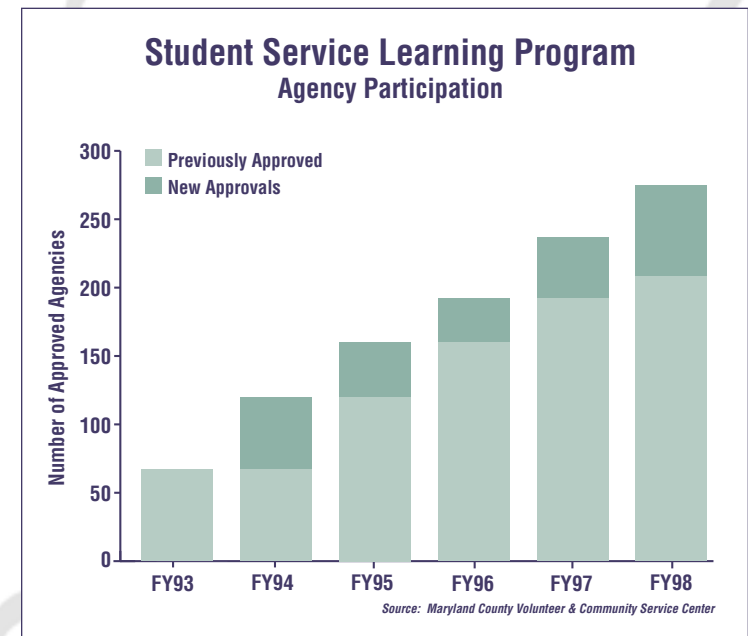
Unattended Child Campaign

Goal: To increase child safety.

Being safe at home, school and in the neighborhood also empowers young people to grow up to be healthy, caring and responsible. The Public Libraries Unattended Child Campaign is one effort to make children safer in their communities. This campaign, which raises the awareness of both children and caregivers as to the dangers of leaving children alone at public buildings, such as libraries and schools at closing time, has resulted in a 50 percent reduction in the number of unattended children since it began in 1997.

Program Measure 1: Number of incident reports regarding cases of unattended children at closing time reported by libraries:

- During a six-month period, January to June 1996, 16 branches of the Montgomery County Department of Public Libraries reported a total of 134 children below age 16 left unattended with no parent or caregiver to meet them when the library closed for the evening.
- Due to increased diligence on the part of library staff, the number of incidents of unattended children in Montgomery County Public Libraries at the close of business have dropped by 50% between FY98 and FY99.



Boundaries and Expectations

Clear rules and consequences protect youth from developing problem behaviors. It is important that youth who break the law take responsibility for their behavior and that there are appropriate consequences.

Teen Court

Goal: To reduce juvenile crime.

Montgomery County's Teen Court, which began in 1997, is a collaborative effort of the State's Attorney's Office, Police Department, Montgomery County Public Schools, the Department of Juvenile Justice, Montgomery County Judges and student representatives. Teens who have admitted committing an offense appear before a volunteer teen jury, which hears the facts of the case and selects an appropriate, constructive sentence. Teens also volunteer to function as defense and prosecuting attorneys. Teen Court contains the following features found in successful programs for delinquent youth:

- Frequent, timely and accurate feedback for behavior.
- The community sends a clear message to first time offenders that such behavior is unacceptable, and peers reinforce that message.
- Reduced influence of negative role models.

Teens who volunteer as jurors or attorneys benefit by:

- Opportunities for success and development of a positive self-image.
- Bonding to pro-social adults and institutions.
- Opportunity to explore adult roles that may influence future careers.
- Participating in a process that teaches decision-making skills.

Performance Measure 1: Percent of juvenile offenders who are sent to Teen Court who complete their sentences:

As of March 1999, 388 teens have appeared before Teen Court of Montgomery County; 94% completed their sentences.

Performance Measure 2: Percent of juvenile offenders who complete the Teen Court sentence and become repeat offenders:

Statistics are not yet available on the percent of juvenile offenders who complete the Teen Court and become repeat offenders.

Commitment to Learning

Conservation Corps

Goal: To increase high school graduation and job acquisition.

The Montgomery County Conservation Corps, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), offers county residents age 17 through 24 who are out of school and unemployed an opportunity for paid on-the-job training in conservation, carpentry, landscaping and urban maintenance. Corps members are taught basic work habits and life skills.

By late adolescence, employment is a crucial factor in development and one of the most important predictors of later adjustment. Yet employment is arguably the least consistently addressed component in conventional interventions with delinquent youth. A national study of state and local youth service and conservation corps programs found men who participate in the corps work more, earn more, vote more often, and earn more associate degrees and are less likely to be arrested than a comparable group of men. The Corps encourages its members to improve their employment potential by completing their GEDs or high school diploma, continuing their education and securing employment.

Program Measure 1: Percent of corps members who earn a high school diploma or GED while in the program:

- Of the 25 corps members who completed the program in FY98, 19 entered without a high school diploma or GED.
- By the end of the year, 5 of the 19 (26.3%) had earned a GED, an increase from 21.7% the previous year.

Program Measure 2: Percent of corps members who entered the Job Corps, returned to school or obtained employment after leaving the program:

While the Conservation Corps tries to contact all program graduates within 60 days after completing the program, it has been unable to reach all of them. In FY98, of the 25 corps members who completed the program, staff were able to contact 16 two months after graduation. Of those, 14 had a job and two had returned to school. The previous year, 22 of the 33 program graduates were contacted. Eighteen had jobs, three had returned to school and one had joined the Job Corps.

Percentage of Corps Members Who Earned a High School Diploma or GED While in the Program



Source: Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services

Support

***R**eceiving care and support from family members, neighbors, school staff and other adults has been shown to be an important protective factor. Youth who receive support from three or more non-parent adults engage in less negative behavior than youths who do not have close relationships with adults.*

Police Activities League Recreation Center

Goals: To reduce arrests and substance abuse.
To increase academic performance.

The Police Activities League (PAL) is a nonprofit organization established to provide a safe environment for youth ages 7-17 through structured activities and positive interaction with police officers. PAL is a partnership between the Montgomery County Police Department, the Department of Recreation and the Maryland-National Capital Park Police. In July 1997, PAL opened its doors for the first time at the Good Hope Community Center. PAL's goals are to reduce juvenile arrests, use of alcohol and other drugs, and improve academic performance. PAL reported the following achievements for the 100 youth who regularly attended in 1998:

Program Measure 1: Percent of participants who are arrested or receive a citation:

10% of participants had been arrested at least once prior to PAL opening and only 2% have been re-arrested since PAL began. One member was arrested for the first time. Since PAL began, only two juveniles living in the Good Hope Community Center area have been arrested.

Program Measure 2: Percent of participants who report use of illegal substances:

- Prior to joining PAL, 34% of participants surveyed said they smoked cigarettes, but one year after joining, less than 6% smoked.
- Prior to joining PAL, 60% of the participants reported drinking alcohol and less than 2% after joining.
- Before joining PAL, 8.5% of participants reported that they used illegal drugs and none reported using drugs after joining.

Program Measure 3: Average collective grade point average of participants:

While PAL was unable to obtain average grade point average from the schools, the program did find that almost all of the program participants showed improvement in their academic performance, as well as improvement in behavior and attendance.

Teen Parent Support Teams

Goals: To ensure the health of babies born to teen parents.
To reduce high school drop out.

The Teen Parent Support Team (TPST) Program is a collaborative effort involving the DHHS School Health Services, Montgomery County Public Schools and the more than forty members of the Montgomery County Interagency Coordinating Committee on Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Parenting (ICCAPPP). The goal of the program is to help pregnant or parenting students to become healthy and self-sufficient members of our community. ICCAPPP coordinates services for pregnant and parent teens at all schools.

Research shows that girls who become pregnant while still in school are at greater risk of poor birth outcomes, dropping out of school, and relying on public assistance. To improve the health and self-sufficiency of teen parents and their children, school health nurses attempt to identify all pregnant girls in their schools and provide counseling, education and case management. The number of identified pregnant teens declined from 191 in 1994 to 142 in 1998.

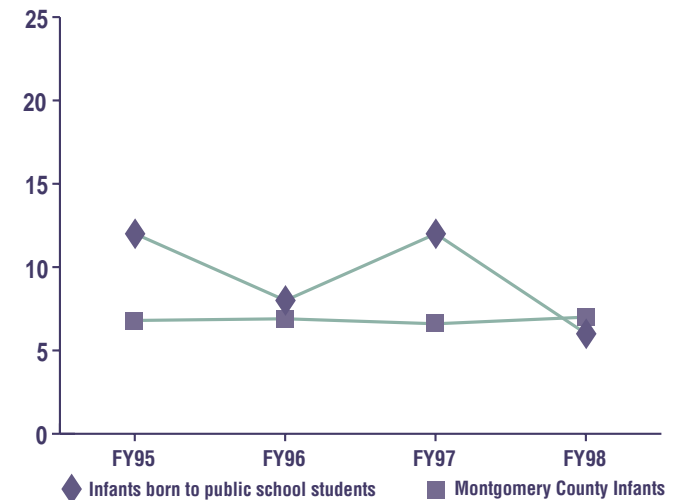
Program Measure 1: Percent of all infants born to high school teens that are of low birth weight (5.5 pounds or 2,500 grams):

- The percent of all babies born to high school students who are low weight has fluctuated from a high of 12% in FY95 and FY97, to a low of 6% in FY98.
- Historically, a higher percentage of low birth weight babies are born to teen mothers than to women of all ages in Montgomery County, which is consistent with national data.

Program Measure 2: Percent of newly pregnant teens in high school who completed the current school year:

To help pregnant and parent teens remain in school, the school nurses and support teams provide individual and group education and counseling, work with the schools to adjust the students' schedules if needed and help the students obtain child care vouchers. In FY98, 94% of the students identified by school nurses as pregnant completed the school year, either by remaining in school, home instruction, or passing the GED exam. The national drop-out rate for teen mothers is 50%.

Percent of All Infants Born to Public School Students That Are Low Birth Weight Compared to Countywide Percentage



Source: Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services

Positive Values

To protect youth from using alcohol or other drugs, it is important that communities make sure that teens do not have easy access to these substances. Montgomery County has several efforts to reduce adolescent drinking and drug use. One program that has proven successful is the use of underage volunteers to identify retailers who sell alcoholic beverages to minors.

Alcohol and Tobacco Sales To Minors

Goals: To reduce alcohol consumption by minors.
To reduce tobacco use by minors.

Starting in FY92, the Office of the Board of License Commissioners began an aggressive enforcement program to decrease violations related to the sale of alcoholic beverages to minors by sending underage volunteers to attempt to purchase alcoholic beverages. In FY99, that office began using a similar strategy for tobacco sales to minors.

Program Measure 1: Percent of retail licensed facilities distributing tobacco products to those under age 18:

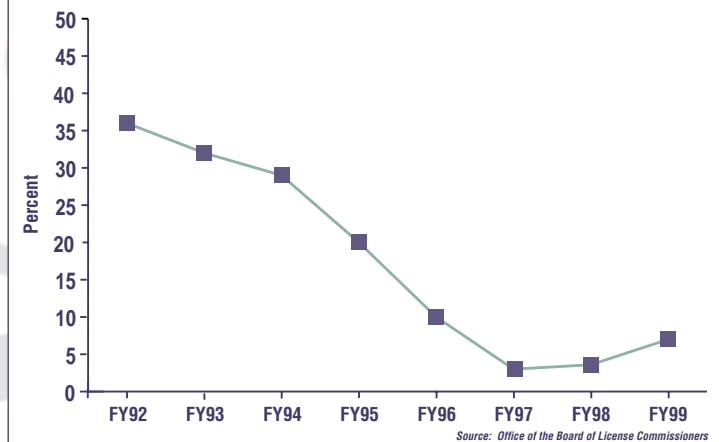
New measure—data to be available FY00.

Program Measure 2: Percent of alcoholic beverage licensed facilities selling to those under age 21:

- Since the program began, the violation rate declined from 36% in 1992 to a low of 3% in 1997.
- Although the rate increased to 7% in 1999, it remains below 10% and well below the national average.

The substantial decrease in alcoholic beverage licensed facilities selling to minors is attributed to continuous monitoring of facilities. Licensees are aware that underage volunteer compliance checks are conducted on a weekly and/or monthly basis. Equally important are the stiff penalties assessed to licensees. First time violators are fined \$1,000. Repeat violators have been fined up to \$20,000, issued a 60 day suspension, or have had their alcoholic beverage licenses revoked. All fines, suspensions, and revocations are printed in the Department of Liquor Control newsletter, which is issued to all alcoholic beverage licensed facilities. Through press reports, the Department of Liquor Control newsletter, and word of mouth, licensees are well aware of the underage volunteer enforcement effort.

Percent of Facilities Tested Found to be Selling Alcohol to Minors



Young People Making Smart Choices *Partners Who Contribute to Asset Building*

The Montgomery County Collaboration Council and the Children's Agenda Outcomes Work Group members wish to recognize the following partners.

Montgomery County Departments or Agencies

Department of Public Works and Transportation
Department of Environmental Protection
Montgomery County Public Information Office
Office of the County Attorney

Government Agencies/Departments

City of Rockville, Youth, Family and Community Services
Department of Juvenile Justice
District and Circuit Court judges
Maryland Department of Human Resources
Maryland National Park and Planning Commission
Montgomery College, Project Next Step Work/Study Program
National Park Service

Community Partners

Americorps, Volunteer Maryland
B-CC YMCA's Bethesda Youth Services
Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center
Career Connections
Chambers of Commerce
Child Care Connection Program
Community Clinic
Community members and local businesses
Community recreation groups
CYGMA Health Services
DADS Program
Early Head Start Programs
Family Works Program

Florence Crittenton Services of Greater Washington

Friends of the MCC Board

Gazette Newspapers

Good Hope Community Center

GUIDE Youth Services, Olney, Gaithersburg, Upcounty

Interages-Senior Volunteer Program

Kensington/Wheaton Youth Services

Local Businesses and Non-Profit Groups

MCCPTA

Mental Health Association

MOMS Program

Montgomery County Association of Volunteer Administrators

Montgomery County Bar Association

Montgomery County Community Health Partnership

Montgomery County Parent-Teacher Association

Montgomery Youth Works

National Association of Service and Conservation Corps

National Police Activities League

Oasis—Senior Volunteer Program

PEARLS Program

Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC, Inc.

Silver Spring Youth Services

Students

Volunteers

Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program

Workforce Development Corporation

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Principles to Guide Collaborative Governance

WE, the County Executive, the County Council, the Board of Education and the Collaboration Council are committed to achieving better outcomes for all children, youth and families in Montgomery County by building bridges across institutional lines.

We agree:

- To employ collaboration as the vehicle for joint planning, problem-solving, decision-making, policy development, resource allocation and developing strategies for better outcomes.
- To recognize the interdependence of our mission to serve the residents of Montgomery County and to respect each other's mandates, autonomy, diversity and cultural values.
- To jointly initiate and support programs and services that are outcome-based, collaborative, comprehensive, preventive, culturally competent, accessible and effective in helping children and their families thrive and succeed within their community.
- To create mechanisms to diminish or eliminate categorical, narrowly defined programs in order to achieve better outcomes.
- To commit joint efforts to fully support replication of programs and strategies which demonstrate measurable positive outcomes.
- To use collaborative resource allocation strategies which include leveraging, redirecting and pooling funds and building joint budgets.
- To develop accountability measures, across all public and private organizations, which use benchmarks to track enhanced child and family well-being.
- To foster and nurture creativity, mutual trust and respect among ourselves, our staffs and the communities we serve.



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